The Journal of Historical Review

Special Issue

ROOSEVELT AND WAR IN EUROPE 1938-40

Origins and Interventions

Mark Weber
President Roosevelt's Campaign To Incite War in Europe: The Secret Polish Documents

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The Roosevelt Legacy and The Kent Case

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Volume Four, Number Two *Summer 1983*

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A Note From The Editor

Few discussions of the specific topic "Roosevelt and the Origins of World War II" pay much attention to events before 1 September 1939. At most some preliminary words are uttered about the development of Roosevelt's thoughts and policy in the 1930s: his increasing concern, once the New Deal became firmly ensconced and especially after he was re-elected in 1936, with events in Europe and Asia as crisis followed crisis; his worries about the rise of "the dictatorships" (non-Soviet variety only); his somewhat hesitant public switch beginning in 1937 away from neutrality of *sentiment* and toward a more activist consideration of America's role in the world; his efforts thereafter to "educate" a rather unreceptive American public into appreciating this role and its possible future consequences. If Roosevelt's difficult position in the late 1930s of trying to push along public opinion on international affairs faster than it wanted to go could be termed, as one pro-Roosevelt historian has put it, "leadership in isolation," then the events in Europe leading toward war could be described, in the standard view, as "crisis in isolation"—from America; the war just happened, a European affair which Roosevelt could not appreciably influence, though he had certainly seen it coming, doing his best to warn both his own people and European leaders.

It remains the case that for most historians, thus for their students and the history-reading public at large, the real story and starting point of the origins of the war relative to Roosevelt must be that of America's involvement in the war: how this country got in *once the conflict in Europe began*. This story, actually three stories—of the 1939-41 "Battle against Isolation" within; of the "undeclared war" of navies on the Atlantic as Roosevelt did his best to evade neutrality and help out England (and, after June 1941, Russia) even to the point of intervening militarily to frustrate German attempts at interception, and of the deterioration of Japanese-American relations in the Pacific leading to Pearl Harbor—has received a considerable amount of treatment from both mainstream and revisionist historians. So too has the more generalized story of German-American and Japanese-American relations in the decade preceding 1941. But, with a few exceptions, it is just toward 1941—precisely, 7 December and 11 December 1941—that such studies aim, including those claimed specifically to be about Roosevelt's role in the *origins* of *World War II*. This—the full-fledged, declared shooting war for America—is the war that is meant. With what started in Europe two years earlier, and the prelude to it, there was—so the consensus goes—not much, if any, real Roosevelt involvement. It is not an issue.

So the dearth of treatment has made it seem. In fact, the issue of President Roosevelt's active part in the origins and partial responsibility for the outbreak of *European* war in *1939* is very real, very much alive, and very interesting. And it is not new, though it has been suppressed. Several early post-war studies—the exceptions mentioned above—written mostly in the decade after 1945 and either singular essays or parts of larger works, focused on just this question. That these were exclusively revisionist in nature says something about the nature of the issue. It has not been one that mainstream, pro-Roosevelt, historians are too enthused about. For them, there is either no story here—or one they would not feel comfortable telling. Since the appearance of the early revision-

ist efforts, which slipped easily and not accidentally into obscurity, this subject has been ignored and allowed to disappear into the murky backwaters of a forgotten branch of the stream of history.

We hope to begin remedying this situation with this, the first "theme" issue of *The JHR*. The subjects of the three essays presented here have long deserved careful consideration. It is hoped that they will help to stimulate more interest and new research in this particular topic. It is certain that their importance cannot be ignored by honest and curious historiography.

Mark Weber in "President Roosevelt's Campaign To Incite War in Europe" explores the meaning and historical importance of Polish diplomatic documents which were captured by the Germans in Warsaw, selections from which were published in the German press, in a *White Book* and in other official or semi-official editions. These documents, which bear heavily on the roles of Roosevelt and his ambassador-at-large William C. Bullitt in encouraging strident Anglo-French-Polish defiance of Germany's program for a peaceful revision of the unfair Versailles territorial/ethnological provisions, are of the utmost importance in understanding what Roosevelt was thinking, doing and trying to do in Europe in the prelude to war. What emerges is a Roosevelt who was no innocent bystander merely sending private, occasionally public, messages of concern to European leaders from time to time, all in the quest for peace. Instead the documents make clear the picture of a Roosevelt actively meddling in European affairs at every turn, promising, cajoling, threatening—all toward the vigorous promotion of an anti-German front, ultimately toward war. Though well known and readily available, the documents have been ignored, downplayed, or rejected by all mainstream historians, largely on account of their published origination as a German propagandistic "colored book." Denounced by American officials immediately upon release as inauthentic—forgeries concocted by the Germans—most historians have not seen fit to question the official denials and look for themselves, with the aid of much relevant evidence made available since the war, into the matter of their authenticity. It is the signal contribution of Mark Weber that he has uncovered and here marshals for the first time all the evidence which points toward the documents being, in fact, authentic; in his words, the question is now "beyond doubt." He goes beyond merely demonstrating this, presenting lengthy selections from the documents newly translated by himself (including some parts never before translated into English), and fitting their significance in to the overall context of Roosevelt's policy. The conclusions presented in this well-rounded and pathbreaking essay are clearly ones that historians of Roosevelt foreign policy will not be able to ignore.

In "President Roosevelt and the Origins of the 1939 War," excerpted from *Der erzwungene Krieg* by David L. Hoggan, we present for the first time in English the pertinent conclusions reached in what after 22 years remains the most thorough—and most radically revisionist—volume ever published on the general subject of the war's origins. Dr. Hoggan's treatment of Roosevelt in the book is incidental to his main theme, which is German-Polish and Anglo-German relations and how and why these led to war in 1939; his explication of Roosevelt's role in the crucial years

1938-39 nevertheless constitutes the most formidable (and formidably documented) narrative presentation on the subject ever to appear. It is an excellent companion piece to Charles C. Tansill's early essay "The United States and the Road to War in Europe" (which appeared in Harry Elmer Barnes's anthology *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace*), heretofore the standard treatment in English. Dr. Hoggan's treatment, with its in-depth emphasis on the last year before war, and its use of many sources not available to Tansill, effectively expands upon and updates the earlier work. It is our regret that space considerations prevent publication here of the extensive footnotes. These will, however, appear in the complete published edition of *Der erzwungene Krieg* as *The Forced War*, forthcoming from the Institute for Historical Review. Should any monograph reprint of Dr. Hoggan's article be produced—and if the reception justifies it the entire contents of this issue will be published in an expanded book format—the notes for the article will also of course appear therein.

The Weber and Hoggan essays deal with Roosevelt and secret *origins* of European war, 1938-39; the third essay here deals with Roosevelt's secret *interventions* in European war, 1940. Until recently these have not been well-known—though they have been hinted at, sometimes luridly, ever since the *New York Times* published in June 1940 a terse announcement from the American embassy in London to the effect that an employee of the embassy had been arrested and detained by the British on the grounds of (British) national security. Tyler Gatewood Kent, code-clerk, was caught with approximately 1,500 documents in his possession which had been copied or abstracted from highly secret communications passing through the embassy. A fervent anti-interventionist, Kent became convinced by what he saw coming across his desk that President Roosevelt was lying to the American people about commitments to Britain and other commitments relative to the war. He determined to collect the evidence—which included communications between Roosevelt and Winston Churchill (at a time when Churchill was merely First Lord of the Admiralty)—so that it could be presented to certain anti-interventionist senators and expose Roosevelt's secret operations to the light of day. As more details became public, the "Kent Case" became a *cause celebre* among certain anti-Roosevelt publicists and historians. Kent himself was released and returned to America in 1945. Once the facts of the "Case" were well-established with the passing of wartime secrecy, attention focused on the contents of the "Kent Documents" which had been seized from him at the time of his arrest. Not until 1972 were they released, an event which prompted a number of historical monographs on the subject (see the bibliography on p. 203). Not until 1983 has Tyler Kent himself written his own account of what he saw, what he did, why he did it, what happened to him, and what he thinks about it all in retrospect. His essay was written especially for *The JHR*. Mark Weber provides a concise introduction, highlighting the most important revelations contained in the documents, which he examined at the National Archives.

—*Keith Stimely*

President Roosevelt's Campaign To Incite War in Europe:

THE SECRET POLISH DOCUMENTS

MARK WEBER

Major ceremonies were held in 1982 to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. With the exceptions of Washington and Lincoln, he was glorified and eulogized as no other president in American history. Even conservative President Ronald Reagan joined the chorus of applause. In early 1983, newspapers and television networks remembered the fiftieth anniversary of Roosevelt's inauguration with numerous laudatory tributes.

And yet, with each passing year more and more new evidence comes to light which contradicts the glowing image of Roosevelt portrayed by the mass media and politicians.

Much has already been written about Roosevelt's campaign of deception and outright lies in getting the United States to intervene in the Second World War prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. Roosevelt's aid to Britain and the Soviet Union in violation of American neutrality and international law, his acts of war against Germany in the Atlantic in an effort to provoke a German declaration of war against the United States, his authorization of a vast "dirty tricks" campaign against U.S. citizens by British intelligence agents in violation of the Constitution, and his provocations and ultimatums against Japan which brought on the attack against Pearl Harbor—all this is extensively documented and reasonably well known.[1]

Not so well known is the story of Roosevelt's enormous responsibility for the outbreak of the Second World War itself. This essay focuses on Roosevelt's secret campaign to provoke war in Europe prior to the outbreak of hostilities in September 1939. It deals particularly with his efforts to pressure Britain, France and Poland into war against Germany in 1938 and 1939.

Franklin Roosevelt not only criminally involved America in a war which had already engulfed Europe. He bears a grave responsibility before history for the outbreak of the most destructive war of all time.

This paper relies heavily on a little-known collection of secret Polish documents which fell into German hands when Warsaw was captured in September 1939. These documents clearly establish Roosevelt's crucial role in bringing on the Second World War. They also reveal the forces behind the President which pushed for war.

While a few historians have quoted sentences and even paragraphs from these documents, their importance has not been fully appreciated. There are three reasons for this, I believe. First, for many years their authenticity was not indisputably established. Second, a complete collection of the documents has not been available in English. And third, the translation of those documents which has been available in English until now is deficient and unacceptably bad.

When the Germans took Warsaw in late September 1939, they seized a mass of documents from the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In a letter of 8 April 1983, Dr. Karl Otto Braun of Munich informed me that the documents were captured by an SS brigade led by Freiherr von Kuensberg, whom Braun knew personally. In a surprise attack, the brigade captured the center of Warsaw ahead of the regular German army. Von Kuensberg told Braun that his men took control of the Polish Foreign Ministry just as Ministry officials were in the process of burning incriminating documents. Dr. Braun was an official of the German Foreign Office between 1938 and 1945.

The German Foreign Office chose Hans Adolf von Moltke, formerly the Reich's Ambassador in Warsaw, to head a special Archive Commission to examine the collection and sort out those documents which might be suitable for publication. At the end of March 1940, 16 of these were published in book form under the title *Polnische Dokumente zur Vorgeschichte des Krieges* ["Polish Documents on the Pre-History of the War"]. The Foreign Office edition was subtitled "German White Book No. 3." The book was immediately published in various foreign language editions in Berlin and some other European capitals. An American edition was published in New York by Howell, Soskin and Company as *The German White Paper*. Historian C. Hartley Grattan contributed a remarkably cautious and reserved foreword.[2]

The translation of the documents for the U.S. *White Paper* edition was inexcusably bad. Whole sentences and parts of sentences were missing and portions were grossly mistranslated. H. Keith Thompson explained to me why this was so during a conversation on 22 March 1983 and in a letter of 13 May 1983. A poor first draft English-language translation had been prepared in Berlin and sent to America. It was given to George Sylvester Viereck, a prominent pro-German American publicist and literary advisor to the German Library of Information in New York City. Thompson knew Viereck intimately and served as his chief aide and re-writer. Viereck had hurriedly redrafted the translation from Berlin into more readable prose but without any opportunity of comparing it to the original Polish text (which he could not read in any case) or even the official German-language version. In making stylistic changes for the sake of readability, the meaning of the original documents was thereby inadvertently distorted.

The matter was also discussed at a small dinner for Lawrence Dennis hosted by Thompson at Viereck's apartment in the Hotel Belleclaire in New York City in 1956. Viereck explained that he had been a highly paid literary consultant to the German government, responsible for the propaganda effect of publications, and could not be concerned with the translation groundwork normally done by clerks. Even the most careful translation of complicated documents is apt to distort the original meaning, and literary editing is certain to do so, Viereck said. Thompson agreed with that view.

In preparing the English-language text for this essay, I have carefully examined the official German translation and various other translations, and compared them with facsimiles of the original Polish documents.

Media Sensation

The German government considered the captured Polish documents to be of tremendous importance. On Friday, 29 March, the Reich Ministry of Propaganda confidentially informed the daily press of the reason for releasing the documents:

> These extraordinary documents, which may be published beginning with the first edition on Saturday, will create a first-class political sensation, since they in fact prove the degree of America's responsibility for the outbreak of the present war. America's responsibility must not, of course, be stressed in commentaries; the documents must be left to speak for themselves, and they speak clearly enough.
>
> The Ministry of Propaganda specifically asks that sufficient space be reserved for the publication of these docu-

ments, which is of supreme importance to the Reich and the German people.

We inform you in confidence that the purpose of publishing these documents is to strengthen the American isolationists and to place Roosevelt in an untenable position, especially in view of the fact that he is standing for re-election. It is however not at all necessary for us to point Roosevelt's responsibility; his enemies in America will take care of that.[3]

The German Foreign Office made the documents public on Friday, 29 March 1940. In Berlin, journalists from around the world, including the United States, were given facsimile copies of the original Polish documents and translations in German. Journalists were permitted to examine the original documents themselves, along with an enormous pile of other documents from the Polish Foreign Ministry.

The release of the documents was an international media sensation. American newspapers gave the story large front page headline coverage and published lengthy excerpts from the documents. But the impact was much less than the German government had hoped for.

Leading U.S. government officials wasted no time in vehemently denouncing the documents as not authentic. Secretary of State Cordell Hull stated: "I may say most emphatically that neither I nor any of my associates in the Department of State have ever heard of any such conversations as those alleged, nor do we give them the slightest credence. The statements alleged have not represented in any way at any time the thought or the policy of the American government." William Bullitt, the U.S. Ambassador to Paris who was particulary incriminated by the documents, announced: "I have never made to anyone the statements attributed to me." And Count Jerzy Potocki, the Polish Ambassador in Washington whose confidential reports to Warsaw were the most revealing, declared: "I deny the allegations attributed to my reports. I never had any conversations with Ambassador Bullitt on America's participation in war."[4]

These categorical public denials by the highest officials had the effect of almost completely undercutting the anticipated impact of the documents. It must be remembered that this was several decades before the experiences of the Vietnam war and Watergate had taught another generation of Americans to be highly skeptical of such official denials. In 1940, the vast majority of the American people trusted their political leaders to tell them the truth.

After all, *if* the documents made public to the world by the German government were in fact authentic and genuine, it would mean that the great leader of the American democracy was a

man who lied to his own people and broke his own country's laws, while the German government told the truth. To accept that would be quite a lot to expect of any nation, but especially of the trusting American public.

Comment from Capitol Hill generally echoed the official government view. Senator Key Pittman, the Democratic Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, called the documents "unmitigated falsehood designed to create dissension in the United States." Senator Claude Peper, Democrat of Florida, declared: "It's German propaganda and shouldn't affect our policies in the least." Only a few were not impressed with the official denials. Representative Hamilton Fish of New york, the ranking Republican member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, called for a Congressional investigation and declared in a radio address: "If these charges were true, it would constitute a treasonable act. If President Roosevelt has entered into secret understandings or commitments with foreign governments to involve us in war, he should be impeached."[5]

American newspapers stressed the high-level denials in reporting the release of the documents. The New York *Times* headline read: U.S. BRANDS AS FALSE NAZI DOCUMENTS CHARGING WE FOSTERED WAR IN EUROPE AND PROMISED TO JOIN ALLIES IF NEEDED. The Baltimore *Sun* headlined: NAZI DOCUMENTS LAYING WAR BLAME ON U.S. ARE ASSAILED IN WASHINGTON.[6]

Although the book of Polish documents was labeled "first series," no further volumes ever appeared. From time to time the German government would make public additional documents from the Polish archives. These were published in book form in 1943 along with numerous other documents captured by the Germans from the French Foreign Ministry and other European archives, under the title *Roosevelts Weg in den Krieg: Geheimdokumente zur Kriegspolitik des Praesidenten der Vereinigten Staaten* ["Roosevelt's Way Into War: Secret Documents on the War Policy of the President of the United States"].[7]

A very important unanswered question is: Where are the original Polish documents today? Unless they were destroyed in the conflagration of the war, they presumably fell into either American or Soviet hands in 1945. In view of recent U.S. government policy on secret archival material, it is very unlikely that they would still be secret today if they had been acquired by the United States. My guess is that if they were not destroyed, they are now either in Moscow or at the East German Central State Archives in Potsdam.

It is particularly important to keep in mind that these secret reports were written by top level *Polish* ambassadors, that is, by men who though not at all friendly to Germany nonetheless un-

derstood the realities of European politics *far better than those who made policy in the United States.*

For example, the Polish ambassadors realized that behind all their rhetoric about democracy and human rights, and expressions of love for the United States, the Jews who agitated for war against Germany were actually doing nothing other than ruthlessly furthering their own purely sectarian interests. Many centuries of experience in living closely with the Jews had made the Poles far more aware than most nationalities of the special character of this people.

The Poles viewed the Munich Settlement of 1938 very differently than did Roosevelt and his circle. The President bitterly attacked the Munich agreement, which gave self-determination to the three and a half million Germans of Czechoslovakia and settled a major European crisis, as a shameful and humiliating capitulation to German blackmail. Although wary of German might, the Polish government supported the Munich agreement, in part because a small Polish territory which had been a part of Czechoslovakia against the wishes of its inhabitants was united with Poland as a result of the Settlement.

The Polish envoys held the makers of American foreign policy in something approaching contempt. President Roosevelt was considered a master political artist who knew how to mold American public opinion, but very little about the true state of affairs in Europe. As Poland's Ambassador to Washington emphasized in his reports to Warsaw, Roosevelt pushed America into war in order to distract attention from his failures as President in domestic policy.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to go into the complexities of German-Polish relations between 1933 and 1939 and the reasons for the German attack against Poland at dawn on the first day of September 1939. However, it should be noted that Poland had refused to even negotiate over self-determination for the German city of Danzig and the ethnic German minority in the so-called Polish Corridor. Hitler felt compelled to resort to arms when he did in response to a growing Polish campaign of terror and dispossession against the one and a half million ethnic Germans under Polish rule. In my view, if ever a military action was justified, it was the German campaign against Poland in 1939.

Poland's headstrong refusal to negotiate was made possible because of a fateful blank check guarantee of military backing from Britain—a pledge that ultimately proved completely worthless to the hapless Poles. Considering the lightning swiftness of the victorious German campaign, it is difficult to realize today that the Polish government did not at all fear war with Germany. Poland's leaders foolishly believed that German might was only an illusion. They were convinced that their troops would occupy Berlin itself within a few weeks and add further German terri-

tories to an enlarged Polish state. It is also important to keep in mind that the purely localized conflict between Germany and Poland was only transformed into a Europe-wide conflagration by the British and French declarations of war against Germany.

After the war the Allied-appointed judges at the International Military Tribunal staged at Nuremberg refused to admit the Polish documents as evidence for the German defense. Had these pieces of evidence been admitted, the Nuremberg undertaking might have been less a victors' show trial and more a genuinely impartial court of international justice.

Authenticity Beyond Doubt

There is now absolutely no question that the documents from the Polish Foreign Ministry in Warsaw made public by the German government are genuine and authentic.

Charles C. Tansill, professor of American diplomatic history at Georgetown University, considered them genuine. " . . . I had a long conversation with M. Lipsky, the Polish ambassador in Berlin in the prewar years, and he assured me that the documents in the *German White Paper* are authentic," he wrote.[8] Historian and sociologist Harry Elmer Barnes confirmed this assessment: "Both Professor Tansill and myself have independently established the thorough authenticity of these documents."[9] In *America's Second Crusade*, William H. Chamberlain reported: "I have been privately informed by an extremely reliable source that Potocki, now residing in South America, confirmed the accuracy of the documents, so far as he was concerned."[10]

More importantly, Edward Raczynski, the Polish Ambassador in London from 1934 to 1945, confirmed the authenticity of the documents in his diary, which was published in 1963 under the title *In Allied London*. In his entry for 20 June 1940, he wrote:

> The Germans published in April a White Book containing documents from the archives of our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, consisting of reports from Potocki in Washington, Lukasiewicz in Paris and myself. I do not know where they found them, since we were told that the archives had been destroyed. The documents are certainly genuine, and the facsimiles show that for the most part the Germans got hold of originals and not merely copies.
>
> In this 'First Series' of documents I found three reports from this Embassy, two by myself and the third signed by me but written by Balinski. I read them with some apprehension, but they contained nothing liable to compromise myself or the Embassy or to impair relations with our British hosts.[11]

In 1970 their authenticity was reconfirmed with the publication of *Diplomat in Paris 1936-1939*. This important work consists of the official papers and memoirs of Juliusz Lukasiewicz, the former Polish Ambassador to Paris who authored several of the secret diplomatic reports made public by the German government. The collection was edited by Waclaw Jedrzejewicz, a former Polish diplomat and cabinet member, and later Professor Emeritus of Wellesley and Ripon colleges. Professor Jedrzejewicz considered the documents made public by the Germans absolutely genuine. He quoted extensively from several of them.

Mr. Tyler G. Kent has also vouched for the authenticity of the documents. He states that while working at the U.S. embassy in London in 1939 and 1940, he saw copies of U.S. diplomatic messages in the files which corresponded to the Polish documents and which confirmed their accuracy.

Two Key Diplomats

Two American diplomats who played especially crucial roles in the European crisis of 1938-1939 are mentioned often in the Polish documents. The first of these was William C. Bullitt. Although his official position was U.S. Ambassador to France, he was in reality much more than that. He was Roosevelt's "super envoy" and personal deputy in Europe.

Like Roosevelt, Bullitt "rose from the rich." He was born into an important Philadelphia banking family, one of the city's wealthiest. His mother's grandfather, Jonathan Horwitz, was a German Jew who had come to the United States from Berlin.[12] In 1919 Bullitt was an assistant to President Wilson at the Versailles peace conference. That same year, Wilson and British Prime Minister Lloyd George sent him to Russia to meet with Lenin and determine if the new Bolshevik government deserved recognition by the Allies. Bullitt met with Lenin and other top Soviet leaders and upon his return urged recognition of the new regime. But he had a falling-out with Wilson and left diplomatic service. In 1923 he married Louise Bryant Reed, the widow of American Communist leader John Reed. In Europe Bullitt collaborated with Sigmund Freud on a psychoanalytical biography of Wilson. When Roosevelt became President in 1933, he brought Bullitt back into diplomatic life.[13]

In November 1933, Roosevelt sent Bullitt to Moscow as the first U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union. His initial enthusiasm for the Soviet system gave way to a deep distrust of Stalin and Communism. In 1936 the President transferred him to Paris. He served there as Roosevelt's key European diplomat until 1940 when Churchill's assumption of leadership in Britain and the defeat of France made his special role superfluous.

In the Spring of 1938, all U.S. envoys in Europe were subordi-

nated to Bullitt by an internal directive of the State Department.[14] As the European situation worsened in 1939, Roosevelt often spoke with his man in Paris by telephone, sometimes daily, frequently giving him precisely detailed and ultra-confidential instructions on how to conduct America's foreign policy. Not even Secretary of State Cordell Hull was privy to many of the letters and communications between Bullitt and Roosevelt.

In France, the New York *Times* noted, Bullitt "was acclaimed there as 'the Champagne Ambassador' on account of the lavishness of his parties, but he was far more than the envoy to Paris: He was President Roosevelt's intimate adviser on European affairs, with telephone access to the President at any hour."[15]

Bullitt and Roosevelt were fond of each other and saw eye to eye on foreign policy issues. Both were aristocrats and thorough internationalists who shared definite views on how to remake the world and a conviction that they were destined to bring about that grand reorganization.

"Between these teammates," the *Saturday Evening Post* reported in March 1939,

> there is a close, hearty friendship and a strong temperamental affinity. The President is known to rely upon Bullitt's judgment so heavily that the ambassador's mailed and cabled reports from abroad are supplemented several times a week by a chat by transatlantic telephone. In addition, Bullitt returns to the United States several times each year to take part in White House councils, to the displeasure of the State Department, which considers him a prima donna.
>
> In the whole roster of the State Department the President could not have found an adviser who would have been so responsive to his own champagne personality as Bullitt. Both men, born patricians, have the same basic enthusiasm for remolding society . . .[16]

In Europe, Bullitt spoke with the voice and the authority of President Roosevelt himself.

The second most important American diplomat in Europe was Joseph P. Kennedy, Roosevelt's Ambassador at the Court of St. James. Like Bullitt he was a wealthy banker. But this Boston Catholic of Irish ancestry was otherwise a very different sort of man. Roosevelt sent Kennedy, an important Democratic party figure and father of a future President, to Britain for purely political reasons. Roosevelt disliked and distrusted Kennedy, and this sentiment grew as Kennedy opposed the President's war policies more and more vehemently. Moreover, Kennedy despised his counterpart in Paris. In a letter to his wife, he wrote: "I talk to Bullitt occasionally. He is more rattlebrained than ever. His judgment is pathetic and I am afraid of his influence on F.D.R. because they think alike on many things."[17]

The Documents

Here now are extensive excerpts from the Polish documents themselves. They are given in chronological order. They are remarkably lucid for diplomatic reports and speak eloquently for themselves.

* * * * *

On 9 February 1938, the Polish Ambassador in Washington, Count Jerzy Potocki, reported to the Foreign Minister in Warsaw on the Jewish role in making American foreign policy:

> The pressure of the Jews on President Roosevelt and on the State Department is becoming ever more powerful . . .
>
> . . . The Jews are right now the leaders in creating a war psychosis which would plunge the entire world into war and bring about general catastrophe. This mood is becoming more and more apparent.
>
> In their definition of democratic states, the Jews have also created real chaos: they have mixed together the idea of democracy and communism and have above all raised the banner of burning hatred against Nazism.
>
> This hatred has become a frenzy. It is propagated everywhere and by every means: in theaters, in the cinema, and in the press. The Germans are portrayed as a nation living under the arrogance of Hitler which wants to conquer the whole world and drown all of humanity in an ocean of blood.
>
> In conversations with Jewish press representatives I have repeatedly come up against the inexorable and convinced view that war is inevitable. This international Jewry exploits every means of propaganda to oppose any tendency towards any kind of consolidation and understanding between nations. In this way, the conviction is growing steadily but surely in public opinion here that the Germans and their satellites, in the form of fascism, are enemies who must be subdued by the 'democratic world.'

On 21 November 1938, Ambassador Potocki sent a report to Warsaw which discussed in some detail a conversation between himself and Bullitt, who happened to be back in Washington:

> The day before yesterday I had a long conversation with Ambassador Bullitt, who is here on vacation. He began by remarking that friendly relations existed between himself and [Polish] Ambassador Lukasiewicz in Paris, whose company he greatly enjoyed.
>
> Since Bullitt regularly informs President Roosevelt about the international situation in Europe, and particularly about

President Roosevelt was the first to express hatred against Fascism. In doing so he was serving a double purpose: First, he wanted to divert the attention of the American people from domestic political problems, especially the problem of the struggle between capital and labor. Second, by creating a war psychosis and by spreading rumors about danger threatening Europe, he wanted to get the American people to accept an enormous armament program which exceeds the defense requirements of the United States.

Regarding the first point, it must be said that the internal situation on the labor market is steadily growing worse. The unemployed today already number twelve million. Federal and state expenditures are increasing daily. Only the huge sums, running into billions, which the treasury expends for emergency labor projects, are keeping a certain amount of peace in the country. Thus far there have only been the usual strikes and local unrest. But how long this kind of government aid can be kept up cannot be predicted. The excitement and indignation of public opinion, and the serious conflict between private enterprises and enormous trusts on the one hand, and with labor on the other, have made many enemies for Roosevelt and are causing him many sleepless nights.

As to point two, I can only say that President Roosevelt, as a clever political player and an expert of the American mentality, speedily steered public attention away from the domestic situation to fasten it on foreign policy. The way to achieve this was simple. One needed, on the one hand, to conjure up a war menace hanging over the world because of Chancellor Hitler, and, on the other hand, to create a specter by babbling about an attack of the totalitarian states against the United States. The Munich pact came to President Roosevelt as a godsend. He portrayed it as a capitulation of France and England to bellicose German militarism. As people say here: Hitler compelled Chamberlain at pistol-point. Hence, France and England had no choice and had to conclude a shameful peace.

The prevalent hatred against everything which is in any way connected with German Nazism is further kindled by the brutal policy against the Jews in Germany and by the émigré problem. In this action, various Jewish intellectuals participated: for instance, Bernard Baruch; the Governor of New York State, Lehman; the newly appointed judge of the Supreme Court, Felix Frankfurter; Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau; and others who are personal friends of President Roosevelt. They want the President to become the champion of human rights, freedom of religion and speech,

and the man who in the future will punish trouble-makers. These groups of people who occupy the highest positions in the American government and want to pose as representatives of 'true Americanism' and 'defenders of democracy' are, in the last analysis, connected by unbreakable ties with international Jewry.

For this Jewish international, which above all is concerned with the interests of its race, to portray the President of the United States as the 'idealist' champion on human rights was a very clever move. In this manner they have created a dangerous hotbed for hatred and hostility in this hemisphere and divided the world into two hostile camps. The entire issue is worked out in a masterly manner. Roosevelt has been given the foundation for activating American foreign policy, and simultaneously has been procuring enormous military stocks for the coming war, for which the Jews are striving very consciously. With regard to domestic policy, it is very convenient to divert public attention from anti-Semitism, which is constantly growing in the United States, by talking about the necessity of defending religion and individual liberty against the onslaught of Fascism.

On 16 January 1939, Polish Ambassador Potocki reported to the Warsaw Foreign Ministry on another lengthy conversation he had with Roosevelt's personal envoy, William Bullitt:

The day before yesterday, I had a longer discussion with Ambassador Bullitt in the Embassy where he called on me. Bullitt leaves on the 21st of this month for Paris, from where he has been absent for almost three months. He is sailing with a whole 'trunk' full of instructions, conversations, and directives from President Roosevelt, the State Department and Senators who belong to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

In talking with Bullitt I had the impression that he had received from President Roosevelt a very precise definition of the attitude taken by the United States towards the present European crisis. He will present this material at the Quai d'Orsay [the French Foreign Ministry] and will make use of it in discussions with European statesmen. The contents of these directives, as Bullitt explained them to me in the course of a conversation lasting half an hour, were:

1. The vitalizing of foreign policy under the leadership of President Roosevelt, who severely and unambiguously condemns totalitarian countries.

2. United States preparations for war on sea, land and air will be carried out at an accelerated pace and will consume the colossal sum of 1.25 billion dollars.

3. It is the decided opinion of the President that France and Britain must put an end to any sort of compromise with the totalitarian countries. They must not get into any discussions aiming at any kind of territorial changes.
4. They have the moral assurance that the United States will abandon the policy of isolation and be prepared to intervene actively on the side of Britain and France in case of war. America is ready to place its whole wealth of money and raw materials at their disposal.

The Polish Ambassador to Paris, Juliusz (Jules) Lukasiewicz, sent a top secret report to the Foreign Ministry in Warsaw at the beginning of February 1939 which outlined U.S. policy towards Europe as explained to him by William Bullitt:

A week ago, the Ambassador of the United States, William Bullitt returned to Paris after a three months' leave in America. Meanwhile, I have had two conversations with him which enable me to inform you of his views regarding the European situation and to give a survey of Washington's policy.

The international situation is regarded by official circles as extremely serious and in constant danger of armed conflict. Those in authority are of the opinion that if war should break out between Britain and France on the one hand, and Germany and Italy on the other, and should Britain and France be defeated, the Germans would endanger the real interests of the United States on the American continent. For this reason, one can foresee right from the beginning the participation of the United States in the war on the side of France and Britain, naturally some time after the outbreak of the war. As Ambassador Bullitt expressed it: 'Should war break out we shall certainly not take part in it at the beginning, but we shall finish it.'

On 7 March 1939, Ambassador Potocki sent a remarkably lucid and perceptive report on Roosevelt's foreign policy to his government in Warsaw. This document was first made public when leading German newspapers published it in German translation, along with a facsimile reproduction of the first page of the Polish original, in their editions of 28 October 1940. The main National Socialist party newspaper, the *Voelkischer Beobachter*, published the Ambassador's report with this observation:

The document itself needs no commentary. We do not know, and it does not concern us, whether the internal American situation as reported by the Polish diplomat is correct in every detail. That must be decided by the Amer-

ican people alone. But in the interest of historical truth it is important for us to show that the warmongering activities of American diplomacy, especially in Europe, are once again revealed and proven by this document. It still remains a secret just who, and for what motives, have driven American diplomacy to this course. In any case, the results have been disasterous for both Europe and America. Europe was plunged into war and America has brought upon itself the hostility of great nations which normally have no differences with the American people and, indeed, have not been in conflict but have lived for generations as friends and want to remain so.

This report was *not* one of the Polish documents which was released in March 1940 and published as part of the "German White Book No. 3" (or the *German White Paper*). However, it was published in 1943 as part of the collection entitled "Roosevelt's Way Into War." As far as I can determine, this English translation is the first that has ever appeared. Ambassador Potocki's secret report of 7 March 1939 is here given in full:

The foreign policy of the United States right now concerns not only the government, but the entire American public as well. The most important elements are the public statements of President Roosevelt. In almost every public speech he refers more or less explicitly to the necessity of activating foreign policy against the chaos of views and ideologies in Europe. These statements are picked up by the press and then cleverly filtered into the minds of average Americans in such a way as to strengthen their already formed opinions. The same theme is constantly repeated, namely, the danger of war in Europe and saving the democracies from inundation by enemy fascism. In all of these public statements there is normally only a single theme, that is, the danger from Nazism and Nazi Germany to world peace.

As a result of these speeches, the public is called upon to support rearmament and the spending of enormous sums for the navy and the air force. The unmistakable idea behind this is that in case of an armed conflict the United States cannot stay out but must take an active part in the maneuvers. As a result of the effective speeches of President Roosevelt, which are supported by the press, the American public is today being conscientiously manipulated to hate everything that smacks of totalitarianism and fascism. But it is interesting that the USSR is not included in all this. The American public considers Russia more in the camp of the democratic states. This was also the case during the Span-

ish civil war when the so-called Loyalists were regarded as defenders of the democratic idea.

The State Department operates without attracting a great deal of attention, although it is known that Secretary of State [Cordell] Hull and President Roosevelt swear allegiance to the same ideas. However, Hull shows more reserve than Roosevelt, and he loves to make a distinction between Nazism and Chancellor Hitler on the one hand, and the German people on the other. He considers this form of dictatorial government a temporary "necessary evil." In contrast, the State Department is unbelievably interested in the USSR and its internal situation and openly worries itself over its weaknesses and decline. The main reason for United States interest in the Russians is the situation in the Far East. The current government would be glad to see the Red Army emerge as the victor in a conflict with Japan. That's why the sympathies of the government are clearly on the side of China, which recently received considerable financial aid amounting to 25 million dollars.

Eager attention is given to all information from the diplomatic posts as well as to the special emissaries of the President who serve as Ambassadors of the United States. The President frequently calls his representatives from abroad to Washington for personal exchanges of views and to give them special information and instructions. The arrival of the envoys and ambassadors is always shrouded in secrecy and very little surfaces in the press about the results of their visits. The State Department also takes care to avoid giving out any kind of information about the course of these interviews. The practical way in which the President makes foreign policy is most effective. He gives personal instructions to his representatives abroad, most of whom are his personal friends. In this way the United States is led down a dangerous path in world politics with the explicit intention of abandoning the comfortable policy of isolation. The President regards the foreign policy of his country as a means of satisfying his own personal ambition. He listens carefully and happily to his echo in the other capitals of the world. In domestic as well as in foreign policy, the Congress of the United States is the only object that stands in the way of the President and his government in carrying out his decisions quickly and ambitiously. One hundred and fifty years ago, the Constitution of the United States gave the highest prerogatives to the American parliament which may criticize or reject the law of the White House.

The foreign policy of President Roosevelt has recently been the subject of intense discussion in the lower house

and in the Senate, and this has caused excitement. The so-called Isolationists, of whom there are many in both houses, have come out strongly against the President. The representatives and senators were especially upset over the remarks by the President, which were published in the press, in which he said that the borders of the United States lie on the Rhine. But President Roosevelt is a superb political player and understands completely the power of the American parliament. He has his own people there, and he knows how to withdraw from an uncomfortable situation at the right moment.

Very intelligently and cleverly he ties together the question of foreign policy with the issues of American rearmament. He particularly stresses the necessity of spending enormous sums in order to maintain a defensive peace. He says specifically that the United States is not arming in order to intervene or to go to the aid of England or France in case of war, but rather because of the need to show strength and military preparedness in case of an armed conflict in Europe. In his view this conflict is becoming ever more acute and is completely unavoidable.

Since the issue is presented this way, the houses of Congress have no cause to object. To the contrary, the houses accepted an armament program of more than one billion dollars. (The normal budget is 550 million, the emergency 552 million dollars.) However, under the cloak of a rearmament policy, President Roosevelt continues to push forward his foreign policy, which unofficially shows the world that in case of war the United States will come out on the side of the democratic states with all military and financial power.

In conclusion it can be said that the technical and moral preparation of the American people for participation in a war—if one should break out in Europe—is preceding rapidly. It appears that the United States will come to the aid of France and Great Britain with all its resources right from the beginning. However, I know the American public and the representatives and senators who all have the final word, and I am of the opinion that the possibility that America will enter war as in 1917 is not great. That's because the majority of states in the mid-West and West, where the rural element predominates, want to avoid involvement in European disputes at all costs. They remember the declaration of the Versailles Treaty and the well-known phrase that the war was to save the world for democracy. Neither the Versailles Treaty nor that slogan have reconciled the United States to that war. For millions there remains only a bitter aftertaste because of unpaid billions which the European states still owe America.

Juliusz Lukasiewicz, Poland's Ambassador to France, reported to Warsaw on 29 March 1939 about further conversations with U.S. envoy Bullitt in Paris. Lukasiewicz discussed Roosevelt's efforts to get both Poland and Britain to adopt a totally uncompromising policy towards Germany, even in the face of strong sentiment for peace. The report concludes with these words:

> . . . I consider it my duty to inform you of all the aforesaid because I believe that collaboration with Ambassador Bullitt in such difficult and complicated times may prove useful to us. In any case it is absolutely certain that he agrees entirely with our point of view and is prepared for the most extensive friendly collaboration possible.
>
> In order to strengthen the efforts of the American Ambassador in London [Joseph Kennedy], I called the attention of Ambassador Bullitt to the fact that it is not impossible that the British may treat the efforts of the United States with well-concealed contempt. He answered that I am probably right, but that nevertheless the United States has at its disposal the means to really bring pressure on England. He would be giving serious consideration to mobilizing these means.

The Polish Ambassador in London, Count Edward Raczynski, reported to Warsaw on 29 March 1939 on the continuing European crisis and on a conversation he had with Ambassador Joseph Kennedy, his American counterpart. Kennedy's remarks to Raczynski confirmed Bullitt's reputation in diplomatic circles as an indiscreet big mouth:

> I asked Mr. Kennedy point blank about the conference which he is supposed to have had recently with [British Prime Minister] Mr. Chamberlain concerning Poland. Kennedy was surprised and declared categorically that a conversation of such special significance never took place. At the same time, and thereby contradicting his own assertion to a certain extent, Kennedy expressed displeasure and surprise that his colleagues in Paris and Warsaw [William Bullitt and Anthony Biddle] 'who are not, as himself, in a position to get a clear picture of conditions in England' should talk so openly about this conversation.
>
> Mr. Kennedy—who made me understand that his views were based on a series of conversations with the most important authorities here—declared that he was convinced that should Poland decide in favor of armed resistance against Germany, especially with regard to Danzig, it would draw England in its wake.

This concludes the excerpts from the Polish reports.

* * * * *

The Path To War

While the Polish documents alone are conclusive proof of Roosevelt's treacherous campaign to bring about world war, it is fortunate for posterity that a substantial body of irrefutable complementary evidence exists which confirms the conspiracy recorded in the dispatches to Warsaw.

The secret policy was confirmed after the war with the release of a confidential diplomatic report by the British Ambassador to Washington, Sir Ronald Lindsay. During his three years of service in Washington, the veteran diplomat had developed little regard for America's leaders. He considered Roosevelt an amiable and impressionable lightweight, and warned the British Foreign Office that it should not tell William Bullitt anything beyond what it wouldn't mind reading later in an American newspaper.[18]

On 19 September 1938—that is, a year before the outbreak of war in Europe—Roosevelt called Lindsay to a very secret meeting at the White House. At the beginning of their long conversation, according to Lindsay's confidential dispatch to London, Roosevelt "emphasized the necessity of absolute secrecy. Nobody must know I had seen him and he himself would tell nobody of the interview. I gathered not even the State Department." The two discussed some secondary matters before Roosevelt got to the main point of the conference. "This is the very secret part of his communication and it must not be known to anyone that he has even breathed a suggestion." The President told the Ambassador that if news of the conversation was ever made public, it could mean his impeachment. And no wonder. What Roosevelt proposed was a cynically brazen but harebrained scheme to violate the U.S. Constitution and dupe the American people.

The President said that if Britain and France "would find themselves forced to war" against Germany, the United States would ultimately also join. But this would require some clever maneuvering. Britain and France should impose a total blockade against Germany without actually declaring war and force other states (including neutrals) to abide by it. This would certainly provoke some kind of German military response, but it would also free Britain and France from having to actually declare war. For propaganda purposes, the "blockade must be based on loftiest humanitarian grounds and on the desire to wage hostilities with minimum of suffering and the least possible loss of life and property, and yet bring the enemy to his knees." Roosevelt conceded that this would involve aerial bombardment, but "bombing from the air was not the method of hostilities which caused really great loss of life."

The important point was to "call it defensive measures or

anything plausible but avoid actual declaration of war." That way, Roosevelt believed he could talk the American people into supporting war against Germany, including shipments of weapons to Britain and France, by insisting that the United States was still technically neutral in a non-declared conflict. "This method of conducting war by blockade would in his [Roosevelt's] opinion meet with approval of the United States if its humanitarian purpose were strongly emphasized," Lindsay reported.[19]

The American Ambassador to Italy, William Phillips, admitted in his postwar memoirs that the Roosevelt administration was already committed to going to war on the side of Britain and France in late 1938. "On this and many other occasions," Phillips wrote, "I would like to have told him [Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister] frankly that in the event of a European war, the United States would undoubtedly be involved on the side of the Allies. But in view of my official position, I could not properly make such a statement without instructions from Washington, and these I never received."[20]

Carl J. Burckhardt, the League of Nations High Commissioner to Danzig, reported in his postwar memoirs on a remarkable conversation held at the end of 1938 with Anthony Drexel Biddle, the American Ambassador to Poland. Biddle was a rich banker with close ties to the Morgan financial empire. A thoroughgoing internationalist, he was an ideological colleague of President Roosevelt and a good friend of William Bullitt. Burckhardt, a Swiss professor, served as High Commissioner between 1937 and 1939.

Nine months before the outbreak of armed conflict, on 2 December 1938, Biddle told Burckhardt

> with remarkable satisfaction that the Poles were ready to wage war over Danzig. They would counter the motorized strength of the German army with agile maneuverability. 'In April,' he [Biddle] declared, 'a new crisis would break out. Not since the torpedoing of the Lusitania [in 1915] had such a religious hatred against Germany reigned in America as today! Chamberlain and Daladier [the moderate British and French leaders] would be blown away by public opinion. This was a holy war!'[21]

The fateful British pledge to Poland of 31 March 1939 to go to war against Germany in case of a Polish-German conflict would not have been made without strong pressure from the White House.

On 14 March 1939, Slovakia declared itself an independent republic, thereby dissolving the state known as Czechoslovakia. That same day, Czechoslovak President Emil Hacha signed a formal agreement with Hitler establishing a German protectorate

over Bohemia and Moravia, the Czech portion of the federation. The British government initially accepted the new situation, but then Roosevelt intervened.

In their nationally syndicated column of 14 April 1939, the usually very well informed Washington journalists Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen reported that on 16 March 1939 Roosevelt had "sent a virtual ultimatum to Chamberlain" demanding that henceforth the British government strongly oppose Germany. According to Pearson and Allen, who completely supported Roosevelt's move, "the President warned that Britain could expect no more support, moral or material through the sale of airplanes, if the Munich policy continued."[22] Chamberlain gave in and the next day, 17 March, ended Britain's policy of cooperation with Germany in a speech at Birmingham bitterly denouncing Hitler. Two weeks later the British government formally pledged itself to war in case of German-Polish hostilities.

Bullitt's response to the creation of the German protectorate over Bohemia and Moravia was to telephone Roosevelt and, in an "almost hysterical" voice, urge him to make a dramatic denunciation of Germany and immediately ask Congress to repeal the Neutrality Act.[23]

In a confidential telegram to Washington dated 9 April 1939, Bullitt reported from Paris on another conversation with Ambassador Lukasiewicz. He had told the Polish envoy that although U.S. law prohibited direct financial aid to Poland, it might be possible to circumvent its provisions. The Roosevelt administration might be able to supply war planes to Poland indirectly through Britain. "The Polish Ambassador asked me if it might not be possible for Poland to obtain financial help and aeroplanes from the United States. I replied that I believed the Johnson Act would forbid any loans from the United States to Poland but added that it might be possible for England to purchase planes for cash in the United States and turn them over to Poland."[24]

On 25 April 1939, four months before the outbreak of war, Bullitt called American newspaper columnist Karl von Wiegand, chief European correspondent of the International News Service, to the U.S. embassy in Paris and told him: "War in Europe has been decided upon. Poland has the assurance of the support of Britain and France, and will yield to no demands from Germany. America will be in the war soon after Britain and France enter it."[25]

In a lengthy secret conversation at Hyde Park on 28 May 1939, Roosevelt assured the former President of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Edvard Benes, that America would actively intervene on the side of Britain and France in the anticipated European war.[26]

In June 1939, Roosevelt secretly proposed to the British that the United States should establish "a patrol over the waters of the

Western Atlantic with a view to denying them to the German Navy in the event of war." The British Foreign Office record of this offer noted that "although the proposal was vague and woolly and open to certain objections, we assented informally as the patrol was to be operated in our interests."[27]

Many years after the war, Georges Bonnet, the French Foreign Minister in 1939, confirmed Bullitt's role as Roosevelt's deputy in pushing his country into war. In a letter to Hamilton Fish dated 26 March 1971, Bonnet wrote: "One thing is certain is that Bullitt in 1939 did everything he could to make France enter the war."[28]

An important confirmation of the crucial role of Roosevelt and the Jews in pushing Britain into war comes from the diary of James V. Forrestal, the first U.S. Secretary of Defense. In his entry for 27 December 1945, he wrote:

> Played golf today with [former Ambassador] Joe Kennedy. I asked him about his conversations with Roosevelt and [British Prime Minister] Neville Chamberlain from 1938 on. He said Chamberlain's position in 1938 was that England had nothing with which to fight and that she could not risk going to war with Hitler. Kennedy's view: That Hitler would have fought Russia without any later conflict with England if it had not been for [William] Bullitt's urging on Roosevelt in the summer of 1939 that the Germans must be faced down about Poland; neither the French nor the British would have made Poland a cause of war if it had not been for the constant needling from Washington. Bullitt, he said, kept telling Roosevelt that the Germans wouldn't fight; Kennedy that they would, and that they would overrun Europe. Chamberlain, he says, stated that America and the world Jews had forced England into the war. In his telephone conversations with Roosevelt in the summer of 1939, the President kept telling him to put some iron up Chamberlain's backside.[29]

When Ambassador Potocki was back in Warsaw on leave from his post in Washington, he spoke with Count Jan Szembek, the Polish Foreign Ministry Under-Secretary, about the growing danger of war. In his diary entry of 6 July 1939, Szembek recorded Potocki's astonishment at the calm mood in Poland. In comparison with the war psychosis that had gripped the West, Poland seemed like a rest home.

"In the West," the Ambassador told Szembek, "there are all kinds of elements openly pushing for war: the Jews, the supercapitalists, the arms dealers. Today they are all ready for a great business, because they have found a place which can be set on fire: Danzig; and a nation that is ready to fight: Poland. They want to do business on our backs. They are indifferent to the

destruction of our country. Indeed, since everything will have to be rebuilt later on, they can profit from that as well."[30]

On 24 August 1939, just a week before the outbreak of hostilities, Chamberlain's closest advisor, Sir Horace Wilson, went to Ambassador Kennedy with an urgent appeal from the British Prime Minister for President Roosevelt. Regretting that Britain had unequivocally obligated itself in March to Poland in case of war, Chamberlain now turned in despair to Roosevelt as a last hope for peace. He wanted the American President to "put pressure on the Poles" to change course at this late hour and open negotiations with Germany. By telephone Kennedy told the State Department that the British "felt that they could not, given their obligations, do anything of this sort but that we could." Presented with this extraordinary opportunity to possibly save the peace of Europe, Roosevelt rejected Chamberlain's desperate plea out of hand. At that, Kennedy reported, the Prime Minister lost all hope. "The futility of it all," Chamberlain had told Kennedy, "is the thing that is frightful. After all, we cannot save the Poles. We can merely carry on a war of revenge that will mean the destruction of all Europe."[31]

Roosevelt liked to present himself to the American people and the world as a man of peace. To a considerable degree, that is still his image today. But Roosevelt cynically rejected genuine opportunities to act for peace when they were presented.

In 1938 he refused even to answer requests by French Foreign Minister Bonnet on 8 and 12 September to consider arbitrating the Czech-German dispute.[32] And a year later, after the outbreak of war, a melancholy Ambassador Kennedy beseeched Roosevelt to act boldly for peace. "It seems to me that this situation may crystallize to a point where the President can be the savior of the world," Kennedy cabled on 11 September from London. "The British government as such certainly cannot accept any agreement with Hitler, but there may be a point when the President himself may work out plans for world peace. Now this opportunity may never arise, but as a fairly practical fellow all my life, I believe that it is entirely conceivable that the President can get himself in a spot where he can save the world . . . "

But Roosevelt rejected out of hand this chance to save the peace of Europe. To a close political crony, he called Kennedy's plea "the silliest message to me that I have ever received." He complained to Henry Morgenthau that his London Ambassador was nothing but a pain in the neck: "Joe has been an appeaser and will always be an appeaser . . . If Germany and Italy made a good peace offer tomorrow, Joe would start working on the King and his friend the Queen and from there on down to get everybody to accept it."[33]

Infuriated at Kennedy's stubborn efforts to restore peace in

Europe or at least limit the conflict that had broken out, Roosevelt instructed his Ambassador with a "personal" and "strictly confidential" telegram on 11 September 1939 that any American peace effort was totally out of the question. The Roosevelt government, it declared, "sees no opportunity nor occasion for any peace move to be initiated by the President of the United States. The people [sic] of the United States would not support any move for peace initiated by this Government that would consolidate or make possible a survival of a regime of force and aggression."[34]

Hamilton Fish Warns The Nation

In the months before armed conflict broke out in Europe, perhaps the most vigorous and prophetic American voice of warning against President Roosevelt's campaign to incite war was that of Hamilton Fish, a leading Republican congressman from New York. In a series of hard-hitting radio speeches, Fish rallied considerable public opinion against Roosevelt's deceptive war policy. Here are only a few excerpts from some of those addresses. [35]

On 6 January 1939, Fish told a nationwide radio audience:

> The inflammatory and provacative message of the President to Congress and the world [given two days before] has unnecessarily alarmed the American people and created, together with a barrage of propaganda emanating from high New Deal officials, a war hysteria, dangerous to the peace of America and the world. The only logical conclusion to such speeches is another war fought overseas by American soldiers.
>
> All the totalitarian nations referred to by President Roosevelt . . . haven't the faintest thought of making war on us or invading Latin America.
>
> I do not propose to mince words on such an issue, affecting the life, liberty and happiness of our people. The time has come to call a halt to the warmongers of the New Deal, backed by war profiteers, Communists, and hysterical internationalists, who want us to quarantine the world with American blood and money.
>
> He [Roosevelt] evidently desires to whip up a frenzy of hate and war psychosis as a red herring to take the minds of our people off their own unsolved domestic problems. He visualizes hobgoblins and creates in the public mind a fear of foreign invasions that exists only in his own imagination.

On 5 March, Fish spoke to the country over the Columbia radio network:

> The people of France and Great Britain want peace but our warmongers are constantly inciting them to disregard the Munich Pact and resort to the arbitrament of arms. If only we would stop meddling in foreign lands the old nations of Europe would compose their own quarrels by arbitration and the processes of peace, but apparently we won't let them.

Fish addressed the listeners of the National Broadcasting Company network on 5 April with these words:

> The youth of America are again being prepared for another blood bath in Europe in order to make the world safe for democracy.
>
> If Hitler and the Nazi government regain Memel or Danzig, taken away from Germany by the Versailles Treaty, and where the population is 90 percent German, why is it necessary to issue threats and denunciations and incite our people to war? I would not sacrifice the life of one American soldier for a half dozen Memels or Danzigs. We repudiated the Versailles Treaty because it was based on greed and hatred, and as long as its inequalities and injustices exist there are bound to be wars of liberation.
>
> The sooner certain provisions of the Versailles Treaty are scrapped the better for the peace of the world.
>
> I believe that if the areas that are distinctly German in population are restored to Germany, except Alsace-Lorraine and the Tyrol, there will be no war in western Europe. There may be a war between the Nazis and the Communists, but if there is that is not our war or that of Great Britain or France or any of the democracies.
>
> New Deal spokesmen have stirred up war hysteria into a veritable frenzy. The New Deal propaganda machine is working overtime to prepare the minds of our people for war, who are already suffering from a bad case of war jitters.
>
> President Roosevelt is the number one warmonger in America, and is largely responsible for the fear that pervades the Nation which has given the stock market and the American people a bad case of the jitters.
>
> I accuse the administration of instigating war propaganda and hysteria to cover up the failure and collapse of the New Deal policies, with 12 million unemployed and business confidence destroyed.
>
> I believe we have far more to fear from our enemies from within than we have from without. All the Communists are united in urging us to go to war against Germany and Japan for the benefit of Soviet Russia.

> Great Britain still expects every American to do her duty, by preserving the British Empire and her colonies. The war profiteers, munitions makers and international bankers are all set up for our participation in a new world war.

On 21 April, Fish again spoke to the country over nationwide radio:

> It is the duty of all those Americans who desire to keep out of foreign entanglements and the rotten mess and war madness of Europe and Asia to openly expose the war hysteria and propaganda that is impelling us to armed conflict.
>
> What we need in America is a stop war crusade, before we are forced into a foreign war by internationalists and interventionists at Washington, who seem to be more interested in solving world problems rather than our own.

In his radio address of 26 May, Fish stated:

> He [Roosevelt] should remember that the Congress has the sole power to declare war and formulate the foreign policies of the United States. The President has no such constitutional power. He is merely the official organ to carry out the policies determined by the Congress.
>
> Without knowing even who the combatants will be, we are informed almost daily by the internationalists and interventionists in America that we must participate in the next world war.

On 8 July 1939, Fish declared over the National Broadcasting Company radio network:

> If we must go to war, let it be in defense of America, but not in defense of the munitions makers, war profiteers, Communists, to cover up the failures of the New Deal, or to provide an alibi for a third term.
>
> It is well for all nations to know that we do not propose to go to war over Danzig, power politics, foreign colonies, or the imperialistic wars of Europe or anywhere in the world.

Powers Behind The President

President Roosevelt could have done little to incite war in Europe without help from powerful allies. Behind him stood the self-serving international financial and Jewish interests bent on the destruction of Germany.

The principal organization which drummed up public support for U.S. involvement in the European war prior to the Pearl Harbor attack was the cleverly named "Committee to Defend

America by Aiding the Allies." President Roosevelt himself initiated its founding, and top administration officials consulted frequently with Committee leaders.[36]

Although headed for a time by an elderly small-town Kansas newspaper publisher, William Allen White, the Committee was actually organized by powerful financial interests which stood to profit tremendously from loans to embattled Britain and from shrewd investments in giant war industries in the United States.

At the end of 1940, West Virginia Senator Rush D. Holt issued a detailed examination of the Committee which exposed the base interests behind the idealistic-sounding slogans:

> The Committee has powerful connections with banks, insurance companies, financial investing firms, and industrial concerns. These in turn exert influence on college presidents and professors, as well as on newspapers, radio and other means of communication. One of the powerful influences used by the group is the '400' and social set. The story is a sordid picture of betrayal of public interest.
>
> The powerful J.P. Morgan interest with its holdings in the British Empire helped plan the organization and donated its first expense money.

Some of the important figures active in the Committee were revealed by Holt: Frederic R. Coudert, a paid war propagandist for the British government in the U.S. during the First World War; Robert S. Allen of the Pearson and Allen syndicated column; Henry R. Luce, the influential publisher of *Time, Life,* and *Fortune* magazines; Fiorella LaGuardia, the fiery half-Jewish Mayor of New York City; Herbert Lehman, the Jewish Governor of New York with important financial holdings in war industries; and Frank Altschul, an officer in the Jewish investment firm of Lazard Freres with extensive holdings in munitions and military supply companies.

If the Committee succeeded in getting the U.S. into war, Holt warned, "American boys will spill their blood for profiteers, politicians and 'paytriots.' If war comes, on the hands of the sponsors of the White Committee will be blood—the blood of Americans killed in a needless war."[37]

In March 1941 a list of most of the Committee's financial backers was made public. It revealed the nature of the forces eager to bring America into the European war. Powerful international banking interests were well represented. J.P. Morgan, John W. Morgan, Thomas W. Lamont and others of the great Morgan banking house were listed. Other important names from the New York financial world included Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, Felix M. and James F. Warburg, and J. Malcolm Forbes. Chicago department store owner and publisher Marshall Field was a

contributor, as was William Averill Harriman, the railroad and investment millionaire who later served as Roosevelt's ambassador in Moscow.

Of course, Jewish names made up a substantial portion of the long list. Hollywood film czar Samuel Goldwyn of Goldwyn Studios was there, along with David Dubinsky, the head of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. The William S. Paley Foundation, which had been set up by the head of the giant Columbia Broadcasting System, contributed to the Committee. The name of Mrs. Herbert H. Lehman, wife of the New York Governor, was also on the list.[38]

Without an understanding of his intimate ties to organized Jewry, Roosevelt's policies make little sense. As Jewish historian Lucy Dawidowicz noted: "Roosevelt himself brought into his immediate circle more Jews than any other President before or after him. Felix Frankfurter, Bernard M. Baruch and Henry Morgenthau were his close advisers. Benjamin V. Cohen, Samuel Rosenman and David K. Niles were his friends and trusted aides."[39] This is perhaps not so remarkable in light of Roosevelt's reportedly one-eighth Jewish ancestry.[40]

In his diary entry of 1 May 1941, Charles A. Lindbergh, the American aviator hero and peace leader, nailed the coalition that was pushing the United States into war:

> The pressure for war is high and mounting. The people are opposed to it, but the Administration seems to have 'the bit in its teeth' and [is] hell-bent on its way to war. Most of the Jewish interests in the country are behind war, and they control a huge part of our press and radio and most of our motion pictures. There are also the 'intellectuals,' and the 'Anglophiles,' and the British agents who are allowed free rein, the international financial interests, and many others.[41]

Joseph Kennedy shared Lindbergh's apprehensions about Jewish power. Before the outbreak of war he privately expressed concerns about "the Jews who dominate our press" and world Jewry in general, which he considered a threat to peace and prosperity. Shortly after the beginning of hostilities, Kennedy lamented "the growing Jewish influence in the press and in Washington demanding continuance of the war . . ."[42]

Betrayal, Failure, Delusion

Roosevelt's efforts to get Poland, Britain and France into war against Germany succeeded all too well. The result was untold death and misery and destruction. When the fighting began, as Roosevelt had intended and planned, the Polish and French

leaders expected the American president to at least make good on his assurances of backing in case of war. But Roosevelt had not reckoned on the depth of peace sentiment of the vast majority of Americans. So, in addition to deceiving his own people, Roosevelt also let down those in Europe to whom he had promised support.

Seldom in American history were the people as united in their views as they were in late 1939 about staying out of war in Europe. When hostilities began in September 1939, the Gallup poll showed 94 percent of the American people against involvement in war. That figure rose to 96.5 percent in December before it began to decline slowly to about 80 percent in the Fall of 1941. (Today, there is hardly an issue that even 60 or 70 percent of the people agree upon.)[43]

Roosevelt was, of course, quite aware of the intensity of popular feeling on this issue. That is why he lied repeatedly to the American people about his love of peace and his determination to keep the U.S. out of war, while simultaneously doing everything in his power to plunge Europe and America into war.

In a major 1940 re-election campaign speech, Roosevelt responded to the growing fears of millions of Americans who suspected that their President had secretly pledged United States support to Britain in its war against Germany. These well-founded suspicions were based in part on the publication in March of the captured Polish documents. The speech of 23 October 1940 was broadcast from Philadelphia to the nation on network radio. In the most emphatic language possible, Roosevelt categorically denied that he had

> pledged in some way the participation of the United States in some foreign war. I give to you and to the people of this country this most solemn assurance: There is no secret Treaty, no secret understanding in any shape or form, direct or indirect, with any Government or any other nation in any part of the world, to involve this nation in any war or for any other purpose.[44]

We now know, of course, that this pious declaration was just another one of Roosevelt's many brazen, baldfaced lies to the American people.

Roosevelt's policies were more than just dishonest—they were criminal. The Constitution of the United States grants authority only to the Congress to make war and peace. And Congress had passed several major laws to specifically insure U.S. neutrality in case of war in Europe. Roosevelt continually violated his oath as President to uphold the Constitution. If his secret policies had been known, the public demand for his impeachment would very probably have been unstoppable.

The Watergate episode has made many Americans deeply conscious of the fact that their presidents can act criminally. That affair forced Richard Nixon to resign his presidency, and he is still widely regarded as a criminal. No schools are named after him and his name will never receive the respect that normally goes to every American president. But Nixon's crimes pale into insignificance when compared to those of Franklin Roosevelt. What were Nixon's lies compared to those of Roosevelt? What is a burglary cover-up compared to an illegal and secret campaign to bring about a major war?

Those who defend Roosevelt's record argue that he lied to the American people for their own good—that he broke the law for lofty principles. His deceit is considered permissible because the cause was noble, while similar deception by presidents Johnson and Nixon, to name two, is not. This is, of course, a hypocritical double standard. And the argument doesn't speak very well for the democratic system. It implies that the people are too dumb to understand their own best interests. It further suggests that the best form of government is a kind of benevolent liberal-democratic dictatorship.

Roosevelt's hatred for Hitler was deep, vehement, passionate—almost personal. This was due in no small part to an abiding envy and jealousy rooted in the great contrast between the two men, not only in their personal characters but also in their records as national leaders.

Superficially, the public lives of Roosevelt and Hitler were astonishingly similar. Both assumed the leadership of their respective countries at the beginning of 1933. They both faced the enormous challenge of mass unemployment during a catastrophic worldwide economic depression. Each became a powerful leader in a vast military alliance during the most destructive war in history. Both men died while still in office within a few weeks of each other in April 1945, just before the end of the Second World War in Europe. But the enormous contrasts in the lives of these two men are even more remarkable.

Roosevelt was born into one of the wealthiest families in America. His was a life utterly free of material worry. He took part in the First World War from an office in Washington as Under-Secretary of the Navy. Hitler, on the other hand, was born into a modest provinicial family. As a young man he worked as an impoverished manual laborer. He served in the First World War as a front line soldier in the hell of the Western battleground. He was wounded many times and decorated for bravery.

In spite of his charming manner and soothing rhetoric, Roosevelt proved unable to master the great challenges facing America. Even after four years of his presidency, millions remained unemployed, undernourished and poorly housed in a vast land

richly endowed with all the resources for incomparable prosperity. The New Deal was plagued with bitter strikes and bloody clashes between labor and capital. Roosevelt did nothing to solve the country's deep, festering racial problems which erupted repeatedly in riots and armed conflict. The story was very different in Germany. Hitler rallied his people behind a radical program that transformed Germany within a few years from an economically ruined land on the edge of civil war into Europe's powerhouse. Germany underwent a social, cultural and economic rebirth without parallel in history. The contrast between the personalities of Roosevelt and Hitler was simultaneously a contrast between two diametrically different social-political systems and ideologies.

And yet, it would be incorrect to characterize Roosevelt as merely a cynical politician and front man for powerful alien interests. Certainly he did not regard himself as an evil man. He sincerely believed that he was doing the right and noble thing in pressuring Britain and France into war against Germany. Like Wilson before him, and others since, Roosevelt felt himself uniquely qualified and called upon by destiny to reshape the world according to his vision of an egalitarian, universalist democracy. He was convinced, as so many American leaders have been, that the world could be saved from itself by remodeling it after the United States.

Presidents like Wilson and Roosevelt view the world not as a complex of different nations, races and cultures which must mutually respect each others' separate collective identities in order to live together in peace, but rather according to a self-righteous missionary perspective that divides the globe into morally good and evil countries. In that scheme of things, America is the providentially permanent leader of the forces of righteousness. Luckily, this view just happens to correspond to the economic and political interests of those who wield power in the United States.

President Roosevelt's War

In April 1941, Senator Gerald Nye of North Dakota prophetically predicted that one day the Second World War would be remembered as Roosevelt's war. "If we are ever involved in this war, it will be called by future historians by only one title, 'the President's War,' because every step of his since his Chicago quarantine speech [of 5 Ocotober 1937] has been toward war."[45]

The great American historian, Harry Elmer Barnes, believed that war could probably have been prevented in 1939 if it had not been for Roosevelt's meddling. "Indeed, there is fairly conclusive evidence that, but for Mr. Roosevelt's pressure on Britain, France

and Poland, and his commitments to them before September 1939, especially to Britain, and the irresponsible antics of his agent provocateur, William C. Bullitt, there would probably have been no world war in 1939, or, perhaps, for many years thereafter."[46]

In *Revisionism: A Key to Peace*, Barnes wrote:

> President Roosevelt had a major responsibility, both direct and indirect, for the outbreak of war in Europe. He began to exert pressure on France to stand up to Hitler as early as the German reoccupation of the Rhineland in March 1936, months before he was making his strongly isolationist speeches in the campaign of 1936. This pressure on France, and also England, continued right down to the coming of the war in September 1939. It gained volume and momentum after the quarantine speech of October 1937. As the crisis approached between Munich and the outbreak of war, Roosevelt pressed the Poles to stand firm against any demands by Germany, and urged the English and French to back up the Poles unflinchingly.
>
> There is grave doubt that England would have gone to war in September 1939 had it not been for Roosevelt's encouragement and his assurances that, in the event of war, the United States would enter on the side of Britain just as soon as he could swing American public opinion around to support intervention.
>
> Roosevelt had abandoned all semblance of neutrality, even before war broke out in 1939, and moved as speedily as was safe and feasible in the face of anti-interventionist American public opinion to involve this country in the European conflict.[47]

One of the most perceptive verdicts on Franklin Roosevelt's place in history came from the pen of the great Swedish explorer and author, Sven Hedin. During the war he wrote:

> The question of the way it came to a new world war is not only to be explained because of the foundation laid by the peace treaties of 1919, or in the suppression of Germany and her allies after the First World War, or in the continuation of the ancient policies of Great Britain and France. The decisive push came from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.
>
> Roosevelt speaks of democracy and destroys it incessantly. He slanders as undemocratic and un-American those who admonish him in the name of peace and the preservation of the American way of life. He has made democracy into a caricature rather than a model. He talks about freedom of speech and silences those who don't hold his opinion.

He talks about freedom of religion and makes an alliance with Bolshevism.

He talks about freedom from want, but cannot provide ten million of his own people with work, bread or shelter. He talks about freedom from the fear of war while working for war, not only for his own people but for the world, by inciting his country against the Axis powers when it might have united with them, and he thereby drove millions to their deaths.

This war will go down in history as the war of President Roosevelt.[48]

Officially orchestrated praise for Roosevelt as a great man of peace cannot conceal forever his crucial role in pushing Europe into war in 1939.

* * * * *

It is now more than forty years since the events described here took place. For many they are an irrelevant part of a best-forgotten past. But the story of how Franklin Roosevelt engineered war in Europe is very pertinent—particularly for Americans today. The lessons of the past have never been more important than in this nuclear age. For unless at least an aware minority understands how and why wars are made, we will remain powerless to restrain the warmongers of our own era.

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5. *Ibid.*, p. 4, and 31 March 1940, p. 1.
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13. *Current Biography 1940*, ed. Maxine Block (New York: H.W. Wilson, 1940), p. 122 ff.
14. Gisleher Wirsing, *Der masslose Kontinent: Roosevelts Kampf um die Weltherrschaft* (Jena: E. Diederichs, 1942), p. 224.
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The Roosevelt Legacy and The Kent Case

TYLER KENT

INTRODUCTION

In May 1940, a 29-year-old American code clerk at the U.S. embassy in London was arrested by British authorities in his apartment. Tyler Kent was charged with having violated the British Official Secrets Act. "For a purpose prejudicial to the safety and interests of the state," the charge stated, Kent had "obtained a document which might be directly or indirectly useful to an enemy." He was sentenced to seven years in prison, but was released and returned to the United States after serving five.

Between June 1940 and December 1945, the Kent case was the subject of numerous American newspaper articles. Most were sensational or highly speculative, since reliable information was hard to come by. (At the time, the British press was strictly censored.) Many Americans wanted to know how a foreign government could secretly arrest and put on trial a U.S. citizen who held diplomatic immunity. Congressmen and newspapers speculated as to what the code clerk really knew about rumored secret arrangements between President Roosevelt and British leader Winston Churchill. Many wondered if Kent had been jailed to keep him from talking. But preoccupation with the war and official government statements satisfied the curiosity of all but a handful. When Kent returned to the United States in 1945 from British imprisonment, almost all interest in the case had evaporated in the general euphoria of Allied military victory. For many years the Kent story was virtually forgotten.

The passage of time and a more sober awareness of how American presidents operate have encouraged new interest in

the case. Dramatic revelations of illegal Presidential actions that emerged from the Vietnam war and the Watergate affair shocked Americans into a bitter realization that their Chief Executive could lie and break the law. In recent years the Kent case has been the subject of several scholarly and semi-scholarly articles. Highly acclaimed author John Toland devoted several pages to the affair in his 1982 revisionist book on Pearl Harbor, *Infamy*. In December 1982 the British television program "Newsnight" examined the Kent case. The broadcast included excerpts from an interview with Kent filmed near his Texas home. Several books about the Kent story are reportedly in preparation. All this testifies to a healthy, growing readiness to critically re-examine President Roosevelt's fateful path into the Second World War.

Tyler Gatewood Kent was born on 24 March 1911 in Newchwang (Yingkow), northern China, where his father, William P. Kent, was serving as the American Consul. The family had strong roots in Virginia. Kent's English forebears settled there in 1644. President John Tyler was a distant relative. A grandfather was Speaker of the Virginia Assembly and lieutenant governor.

Tyler Kent attended St. Alban's School in Washington, D.C., and received his higher education at Princeton (AB, 1931), George Washington University, the Paris Sorbonne, and the University of Madrid. From an early age he showed a remarkable aptitude for languages. Eventually he learned numerous ancient and modern languages. Like his father, Kent chose a career in the State Department foreign service.

His first assignment was to the American embassy in Moscow. From 1934 to 1939, Kent learned first-hand in the Soviet capital about life under Communism. His fluent command of the Russian language helped young Kent to know the Russian people and the realities of Soviet life much more intimately than most diplomats. He developed an intense hatred for the Soviet system and for those who had foisted this monstrous tyranny on Russia.

Like many Americans, Kent was appalled at Roosevelt's support for Stalin's cruel and despotic regime. Kent's personal experience and careful study convinced him that Communism represented a mortal danger to the world, and to the West in particular. President Roosevelt, though, considered the Soviet system a rougher but more progressive version of his own New Deal, both motivated by the same lofty humanistic ideals.

From Moscow Kent was transferred to the U.S. embassy in London. From October 1939 until that fateful 20th day of May, 1940, he served as a code clerk. This was an especially important position there because *all diplomatic dispatches from American missions across Europe to Washington were routed through the London embassy's code room.*

When Kent began work, war had already broken out in Europe. U.S. law and overwhelming public sentiment seemed to insure that America would avoid entanglement in the conflict. But from his special vantage point in London, Kent quickly learned that President Roosevelt was doing everything in his power to subvert the law and deceive the people in order to get America into war.

Kent decided to make copies or summaries of diplomatic dispatches documenting Roosevelt's secret policies and somehow bring them to the attention of sympathetic congressmen and senators. And so he took the course that led to his untimely arrest, briefly made him something of a celebrity, and cost him five years in prison. As he puts it, he got "tangled up in history." In fact he came very close to changing its course.

As code clerk, Kent intercepted hundreds of diplomatic dispatches between the embassies in Europe and the State Department in Washington. He made verbatim copies of most of the messages and paraphrased summaries of the rest. The most important and incriminating of these was the top secret correspondence between Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, which began with a letter from the President dated 11 September 1939.

Until 11 May 1940, Churchill was First Lord of the Admiralty (or head of the British navy). Thus, the exchange of communications between him and Roosevelt until that date was highly irregular because it took place behind the back of the head of the British government, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. Officially, heads of state communicate only with their counterpart heads of state, and any communications otherwise are understood to be for the ultimate attention of the counterpart head of state. In the case of the Roosevelt-Churchill correspondence before 11 May 1940, not only was that exchange designed to be kept secret from Prime Minister Chamberlain, it was indeed something of a conspiracy against him. Churchill wanted to supplant Chamberlain, and Roosevelt himself desired this end. For this reason the exchange was kept especially secret. Until he became Prime Minister himself, Churchill signed his messages to Roosevelt simply, "Naval Person."

The public revelation of the mere existence of a secret Churchill-Roosevelt exchange behind Chamberlain's back would have been highly embarrassing to both correspondents. But if Kent had somehow succeeded in making the contents of the exchange known to the American public, there would have been loud demands for Roosevelt's impeachment.

Kent intercepted and made a complete copy of Churchill's message to Roosevelt of 25 December 1939 (Telegram 2720) in which Churchill informed the President that British warships would continue to violate American sovereignty to seize German ships within the U.S. three mile maritime territorial zone. How-

ever, in order to keep these violations secret, Churchill promised that the seizures would take place out of view from the American shore. "We cannot refrain from stopping enemy ships outside international three-mile limit when these may well be supply ships for U-boats or surface raiders, but instructions have been given only to arrest or fire upon them out of sight of United States shores."

In his message to Roosevelt of 28 February 1940 (Telegram 490), which was also intercepted and copied out by Kent, Churchill wrote that the British would continue to seize and censor U.S. mail from American and other neutral ships on their way to Europe. "All our experience shows that the examination of mails is essential to efficient control," Churchill told Roosevelt. This was, of course, a blatant violation of American neutrality and international law. There was considerable astonishment in the United States when the full extent of Roosevelt's connivance in the illegal British seizure and censorship of American mail to Europe became known many years after the war. If this message intercepted by Kent had been made public in 1940 or 1941, there would have been a first-rate scandal.

In the secret correspondence between Churchill and Roosevelt intercepted by Kent, the two leaders conspired to insure that the United States government would secretly tolerate British violations of American territorial sovereignty and restrictions on neutral American shipping. The two men wanted to avoid any embarrassing incidents that would provoke public indignation in America over the illegal British actions. They also worked out procedures for joint British-American naval reporting of the location of German surface raiders and submarines which violated at least the spirit if not the letter of United States neutrality.

The fact that Kent's diplomatic immunity was waived by the U.S. government so that British authorities could throw him into prison is itself proof that the Roosevelt administration was neutral in name only. If Kent had been discovered intercepting dispatches at the American embassy in Berlin, it is inconceivable that the U.S. government would have waived his immunity so that German authorities could imprison him. To the contrary, the Roosevelt administration would have done everything it could to protect him from any possible prosecution and imprisonment by the German government.

In response to a growing clamor in the press and among the public about a possible official government cover-up in the Kent case, the State Department issued a lengthy public statement on 2 September 1944. The cleverly worded document implied, without ever actually making the charge, that Kent had been a German spy. The State Department in effect admitted, however, that it

had put British interests ahead of American interests and law in the case. Kent's trial had been held in secret, the statement said, "because of the harmful effects to British counter-espionage efforts which were to be anticipated if certain of the evidence became public." Even more revealing was the official admission that Kent's extraordinary treatment was because "The interest of Great Britain in such a case, at a time when it was fighting for its existence, was therefore preeminent." At a time, it must be remembered, when the United States was publicly and legally neutral in the conflict between Britain and Germany, the State Department considered British, and not American, interests in the Kent case to be "preeminent."

In 1939 and 1940, the vast majority of the American people wanted to avoid involvement in the European war. They felt that U.S. participation in the First World War had been a catastrophic error and wanted to insure that the mistake would not be repeated. The Congress was likewise committed to a policy of firm neutrality and had passed the Johnson and Neutrality Acts to make sure that America kept out of war in Europe.

The President is constitutionally charged with the duty to execute the will of the American people as expressed through the Congress. The Constitution reserves the power to make war and peace exclusively to Congress. But with brazen contempt for the will of the people, the law and the constitution, President Roosevelt conspired with a small circle of confidants to incite war in Europe and bring the United States into the conflict. He broke his oath to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Over the years, numerous lies have been invented and spread about Tyler Kent. The most slanderous is that he was a traitor to the United States and a spy for Germany. In fact, Kent was a genuine patriot who put the welfare of his nation above his own personal happiness and security. He was never charged with violating any *American* law. Kent acted on the traditional principle that for United States government officials, American interests (and not those of Britain or any other country) come first. He was sacrificed to foreign interests by his own government.

In London Tyler Kent faced a painful dilemma: What should a government official do when he discovers that his boss, the President of the United States, is breaking the law? Kent felt a greater loyalty to his nation and its laws than to President Roosevelt. His sense of honor moved him to collect documentary evidence of Roosevelt's treacherous crimes and try to bring it before the American people. Kent paid for his "crime" with five years in prison and a tarnished reputation for the rest of his life, while Franklin Roosevelt, who violated the Constitution and numerous laws, was re-elected President and praised as a hero.

If Tyler Kent had somehow succeeded in making public his collection of intercepted documentary evidence, he would have unleased an enormous public outcry for President Roosevelt's removal from office. At the very least he would have temporarily halted Roosevelt's campaign to get America into war. Roosevelt might well have been so discredited that Wendell Willkie would have defeated him in the 1940 presidential election. It is difficult to say whether the Kent disclosures would have been enough to bring about Roosevelt's impeachment. Certainly the documents provide proof of criminal activity sufficient to warrant removal from office. Congress would have been virtually compelled to begin at least preliminary impeachment proceedings. This much can be said with certainty: disclosure of the Kent documents would have dealt a powerful blow to Roosevelt's prestige and credibility. Tyler Kent might then have significantly altered the course of American and world history.

—*Mark Weber*

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There are those who would have us believe that to dust off the mildewed pages of history is an exercise in futility. Those especially believe this who consider the events of forty years ago "ancient history." Many such persons are motivated by a wish to conceal from the rest of us the relatively recent events which have created the world as it is today. There can be no question that the events which led to World War II, and that war itself, have shaped the lives of all of us alive now. In the United States, the political figure who looms largest on the scene as creator, through this war, of the world we live in today is of course Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

During his unprecedented 12 years as President, he was the arbiter of the fates of the hapless millions of his fellow citizens. Roosevelt became President at the beginning of a severe depression which found millions of Americans without work or the means of subsistence. Banks failed and factories shut their gates. Roosevelt inaugurated what he touted as a "New Deal." It consisted mainly of trying to solve the economic woes of the nation with make-work projects financed out of the public treasury. From previous administrations he had inherited a sound monetary system and virtually no national debt. He could therefore launch with impunity a policy of "spend and elect" as a permanent feature of his administration.

Unfortunately, this deficit-financed, government-sponsored program did not solve the problem of the Great Depression. As

I arrived in London in September of 1939 to assume duties at the United States embassy there. My duties included access to sensitive documents dealing with matters of policy. Almost immediately, I became aware that the clandestine activities of the Roosevelt administration were at variance with the public statements of its spokesmen. This included Roosevelt himself and the lesser figures around him. The Neutrality Acts passed by Congress were being cynically flouted. It seemed to me at the time that it was my inescapable duty to try to inform the right persons in the United States of what was going on. It should always be borne in mind that at this time there was no unanimity either in Congress or among the general public with regard to either passive or active participation of the United States in a European conflict. Opinion polls had, in fact, shown a huge majority—83%—opposed to such involvements. On the other hand, Jewish opinion was violently hostile to Germany and great use was made of their control of the media to whip up pro-war sentiments. It seemed hard to understand why the desires of an alleged 3% of the population should prevail over those of 83%.

As a corollary to his war policy, it was quite obviously necessary for Roosevelt to develop a system of alliances and coalitions against the Third Reich since no single Power could successfully challenge the German military. Aside from Roosevelt's collaboration with British agents in Washington, the President had two henchmen in Europe whose function it was to make sure that war would be declared against Germany. These were William C. Bullitt in Paris and Anthony Drexel Biddle in Warsaw. Bullitt had been ambassador in Moscow and had originally gone there full of enthusiasm for the "new civilization." That was in 1934. By 1936 he left, much disillusioned by what he had seen and by the way he had been treated. Bullitt was the quintessential Anglo-American-Fabian-Liberal. He was the wealthy playboy scion of a Philadelphia banking family who early in life took up "liberal" causes. As early as 1919, he was strongly urging Woodrow Wilson to extend recognition to the new Soviet regime lest "some more radical regime might take over." Whomever he had in mind as "more radical" than Lenin and Trotsky and company, he did not identify. Bullitt was not a Communist but he married Louise Bryant, a Communist newspaperwoman and the widow of the Communist John Reed. As is widely known, John Reed's remains are buried in the Kremlin wall in grateful appreciation of his services to the infant Communist regime in Russia. It is not my intent to impute to a husband all the views of his wife but in the case of William Bullitt and Louise Bryant, it would seem that birds of a feather do indeed flock together.

Bullitt, from his vantage point in Paris, became one of the most virulent anti-German war-mongers in the Anglo-American camp.

Possibly his partly Jewish ancestry (Hurwitz) blinded him from recognizing where the true interests of America lay. He was intelligent enough, if somewhat lacking in judgment. He should have known that the only winner in a war which eliminated Germany as a military power would be Soviet Russia. No doubt it was difficult for a lifetime Fabian to admit that he had been wholly wrong about the "new civilization."

The "Potocki Papers," the gist of which I learned in London, clearly and accurately reflected the views of both Bullitt and Biddle: *British interests first, American interests last.* (Subsequent American Presidents would seem to have learned nothing from the lessons of World War II. Ronald Reagan demonstrated in 1982 that British interests take precedence over those of his own country when he sided with the British in the Falklands-Malvinas dispute, choosing to destroy whatever good relations this country had with Latin America for the sake of British prestige.)

Only the passage of time and the unfolding of history can definitively settle matters of historical dispute. Sufficient time has elapsed—some 45 years—since the formulation of Roosevelt's disastrous pre-war and wartime policies so that any impartial observer of the contemporary world scene could now evaluate for himself the concrete results of those policies in terms of the specific interests of the United States. America has gained no advantage whatsoever from "winning" World War II. Thus the war must be considered a net loss—a failure. The very virulence of the "crusade against evil" propaganda which still today fills the air waves and the press is witness to the fact that there really is nothing else to say when assessing the effects of the war. The security of this continent was not enhanced. American trade advantages were ephemeral and transient. Only the Jews profited insofar as they gained their revenge on Nazi Germany as well as spreading Soviet Communism over 40% of the world, not to mention moving great numbers of European Jews into Palestine.

How odd it is that the statesmen of the Western world did not appear to grasp the truth that a defeated and crushed Germany would mean the emergence of Soviet Russia as a major military power inimical to our interests. But so it has come to pass. The modern United States is unable to implement the Monroe Doctrine which had, for more than a century, protected the Americas from European aggression and alien ideologies. We must swallow the bitter pill of Dr. Castro, the Soviets' proconcul in the Western hemisphere, and stand impotently by as Communist regimes wax and flourish in Nicaragua and elsewhere in Central America. My "crime" was in foreseeing some of this when I was a cypher clerk

in the American embassy in London, and in trying to do something to forestall it.

Much of the vicious slander that has been directed against me over the years has centered around the allegation of "disloyalty." The Department of State's press release of 2 September 1944 hammers away at this. Yet *to whom* and *to what* was my loyalty due? It was claimed that I owed loyalty to Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy and to President Roosevelt. Under most circumstances I would agree. But a government employee takes an oath to "support the laws and Constitution of the United States against all enemies, both foreign *and domestic*." (My italics.) Events have now proven that as regards the damage done to the interests of this country no foreign enemy could have done more than Roosevelt. He was the greatest "domestic enemy" and no subordinate owed him any loyalty whatsoever *in the furtherance of his illegal activities*. No court of law has convicted Franklin Delano Roosevelt but the court of history will do so in time. This is the essence of the "Tyler Kent incident" and the justification for my actions in London in 1939 and 1940.

No one—least of all myself—is ever going to claim that the 20th of May, 1940, will go down in history on a par in importance with Roosevelt's "date that will live in infamy." But the former date may well be of interest to those who entertain some respect for constitutional and international law. It was on the morning of that date—10 a.m. if my memory serves me accurately—that the government of the United States took a rather drastic step when it permitted—and in fact cooperated in allowing—the British police to arrest and incarcerate a member of the staff of the American embassy in London, a person who was the bearer of a diplomatic passport and officially protected by the provisions of "diplomatic immunity." In so doing, the government of the United States set an unusual precedent the nature of which we shall examine below. It would be an error to claim that the arrest and imprisonment of embassy officials had never previously occurred in history, but the incidence of such cases is very rare indeed.

This particular day in May was rare for another reason. In a city noted for many things but certainly not for the delights of its climate, this happened to be a quite beautiful day. I was not fated to enjoy it. At 10 a.m. I was startled to hear the smashing of wood and the snapping of locks as a burly goon squad from Scotland Yard, accompanied by an officer of British Military Intelligence and an official of the American embassy, burst into my apartment. My visitors could most certainly have arrived in a more conventional manner and I would certainly have admitted them had they simply knocked and requested admission in the normal polite manner. But they evidently preferred the dramatic smash-

ing of doors. Looking back on it all now, I have become convinced that such tactics were and are used by the police precisely in order to surprise and intimidate. If the wretched object of all this is not only cowed and overawed but is also, perhaps, in. his pyjamas, so much the better for the police.

Why then, one must ask, would the United States government have been a party to this very rare kind of violation of all the normal rules and conventions governing diplomatic personnel? Surely the circumstances which gave rise to such an act must themselves have been quite extraordinarily wicked or dangerous. And why, after 42 years, have the circumstances not been brought out into the clear daylight? Above all: why have *I* waited so long to present the facts to the American public?

The answer is that there is a right time and a wrong time for everything. November 1945, the time when I finally returned to the United States after a period of incarceration in England which lasted the entire duration of the war, was certainly not the right time. This country was in a state of euphoria occasioned by its "victory" over the dastardly enemy. Any attempt to point out that the "victory" just achieved might turn out to be Pyrrhic and more costly to the general welfare than any other event in American history would not only have fallen on deaf ears, but might well have led to the actual physical lynching of anyone expressing such a view. It certainly did entail the moral and psychological lynching of a number of people by the vicious, alien-controlled press and electronic media. No, 1945 was not the time. Certain friends of mine and my family made it possible for me to travel about the country and take a sounding of the mood of the people. I found them, in the main, totally unreceptive to any criticism of Franklin the Great, of America's participation in the war or of the methods used to involve us in that conflict. So it was then; today, things have changed somewhat. There are facts which can no longer be successfully covered up even by the most virulent propaganda of the alien-controlled media. Even the least politically-minded citizens are beginning to ask why, today, after our greatest war and greatest final victory, we are faced with the greatest threat to our national security we have ever known. Someone is responsible; after all, it was Roosevelt himself who said, "Things don't just happen; they are planned that way." Well then, who planned what and why? Who planned to turn over 40% of the world to Bolshevism? Who planned to set up the Bolshevik's advanced bases only ninety miles from our coasts? And if the answer is that no one "planned" these things then the only alternative explanation is that someone committed the most colossal political errors in our history. Is it wrong to try now to assess the blame? Some would call it mere muckraking and inappropriate in such critical times as we now face. But there are

enormous vested interests in preserving the Roosevelt myth. For starters, there is the entire Democratic party. There was a time when they invoked the ghost of Thomas Jefferson as their patron saint. Since the 1930s, Roosevelt has largely taken Jefferson's place. To cast doubts on Roosevelt's sagacity and good judgment is, for some, like doubting the existence of God. Then there are the veterans with their huge organizations. Is it to be supposed that they would take kindly to being told that they were "suckered in" or "taken for a ride," or that the war they fought was ultimately disastrous for their country? As for organized American Jewry, its interests lay entirely in seeing Germany destroyed regardless of the long-term interests of the America in which the Jews hang their shingles.

Let it be posed that there are only two reasons for a State to mobilize its people into armed forces to fight another State: 1) the acquisition of booty in the form of territory or other forms of wealth and 2) to defend the nation from external threats. The "booty" theory is irrelevant in modern times, especially as Roosevelt repeatedly renounced during the war any American claims upon the territory of the enemy. (That, he would relinquish to his partner Joseph Stalin.) In innumerable public statements, Roosevelt argued that this country was compelled to take part in the war, either as a belligerent or as "the arsenal of democracy" supplying war materials (illegal under domestic and international law), in order to "guarantee the security of this country in the future." His constant theme was that if Britain were defeated, the immense Royal Navy would fall into German hands. Germany would then be able to invade South America and would do so. A fake map was circulated which purported to show the areas of South America to be taken over by the Nazis. The map was later revealed as a clever forgery by British intelligence which Roosevelt had knowingly cooperated in disseminating in order to frighten the American public. We know this from British sources; the whole matter is very clearly set forth in the biography of William Stephenson, the principal British agent in the United States engaged in bringing about American participation in the shooting war. Slowly, we are beginning to learn more and more about the intimate cooperation between Britain and the United States in the pre-war epoch. The purpose was allegedly to improve the security of the United States. Thus even though Roosevelt's activities have been shown subsequently to have been illegal, the justification was and is offered that he acted in the overriding national interest.

We return to that Spring day in London, the 20th of May 1940, and the interruption of the Scotland Yard goon squad into my apartment. They were accompanied by one Franklin Gowen, a Second Secretary at the American embassy of whom more anon.

Questions were put to me as to whom I knew and what I did. I gave non-committal answers. While this interrogation was going on, other of the officers were looking into a clothes closet in which they quickly discovered a leather suitcase full of American embassy documents. It has been alleged that there were 1500. I do not know. I never counted them. I was only interested in the contents. I was then whisked away to the embassy in a police car and brought before Ambassador Joseph Kennedy with whom I had a short but acrimonious interview. I could well understand his anger but I believed myself to have been presented with a moral dilemma. On the one hand I wished before it was too late to lay the evidence before the America First Committee and certain non-interventionist Senators. On the other hand, it would be quite useless to me—an unknown person with no political "clout"—to have returned to the United States expecting hard-boiled politicians to give any credence to my story unless I had positive documentation of my charges. I knew that taking documents from the embassy was, under all normal circumstances, a most reprehensible action. On the other hand I did not begin to do so until I had become convinced beyond any further possibility of doubt that Roosevelt and his diplomatic agents were going to embroil us in a war against the wishes of a vast majority of the American people whose opinions on that score had been made very plain in numerous opinion polls in the months just prior to the war and during the "phony war" period. Even the liberal-interventionists admit the accuracy of these polls; what they most vociferously deny is that President Roosevelt deliberately tried to circumvent public opinion. I knew different. From my vantage point in the embassy, I was able to see the dispatches from there to the State Department and to and from other embassies around Europe. From every place the picture was the same: war and intervention. "I hate war," said Roosevelt, but he was planning it. On 3 September 1939, just after the outbreak of war in Europe, Roosevelt said in a radio address: "We seek to keep war from our own fireside by keeping war from coming to the Americas. . . . This nation will remain a neutral nation." At the same time, William C. Bullitt, United States ambassador to France and one of the principal implementers and architects of Roosevelt's interventionist policy, was bringing the strongest pressure to bear on the French prime minister, Edouard Daladier and on his foreign minister, Georges Bonnet, to reject out-of-hand a last minute proposal by Benito Mussolini to organize another summit meeting of European heads of state to head off the impending war. Bullitt—fully in concurrence with Roosevelt—wanted the war to begin, the sooner the better. Any concession to peace-making efforts would only raise the unwelcome possibility that the war could be staved off. Accordingly, Bullitt resisted any such efforts with all his

powers of persuasion. In this he was aided greatly by Jules Lukasiewicz, the Polish ambassador, whose country had just been invaded and who was demanding French—and therefore also British—intervention. Bullitt and Lukasiewicz between them were able to dissuade the Daladier government from accepting Mussolini's initiative and thus ensured the outbreak of a major European war right on schedule.

At this point it is useful to mention that the Potocki papers which the Germans discovered in the Polish foreign office and which shed considerable light on other interventionist activities of Bullitt, are all quite genuine; *their substance was reflected in dispatches which passed through the London embassy and were read by me in plain English.* But when they were discovered and published by the Germans they were all declared by Roosevelt and the State Department to be impudent forgeries. Today, most reputable historians, though minimizing their importance, recognize that they are quite genuine. Their significance, however, is much better appreciated when they are studied in conjunction with other documents bearing on the American foreign policy of that period. Of especial interest are the conversations which Biddle, America's ambassador to Poland, had with the Polish foreign minister, Colonel Beck, and General Rydz-Smigly, head of the Polish army, during the Summer of 1939. The conversations were duly reported to the State Department.

It must be remembered that until the Germans demonstrated the efficacy of the blitzkrieg, all of the Allies and the United States as well believed that the coming war would be one of attrition and trench warfare. The Poles were expected to hold out for weeks or even months. And so we find Biddle assuring the Polish authorities that American military assistance would be forthcoming just as soon as Roosevelt could put the concept over on Congress. This was rather cold comfort for the Poles but they had, perforce, to put as good a face on it as possible and accept whatever crumbs fell their way.

Shortly after these interviews between Biddle and the high-ranking Poles, President Roosevelt had the sublime hypocrisy to address a letter to President Moscicki of Poland offering to mediate the dispute with Germany. So the picture is thus: on the one hand the American ambassador is urging the Poles to fight and promising military assistance if they do; on the other hand Roosevelt is offering himself as a mediator, olive branch in hand. Take your choice. It should be remembered that much of the warmongering engaged in by Roosevelt's diplomatic agents in the late 1930s, particularly in France and Poland, was in the form of verbal exhortations and promises of aid and support of all kinds, including direct military intervention. Every head of state in Europe, and especially in England, recognized perfectly well that

if the United States were to become sufficiently involved in an economic and political sense, military intervention would inevitably follow soon thereafter. Much of the American activity was never committed to paper in the exact manner in which it transpired. Thus, to the chagrin of historians, it will never appear in the National Archives as available "hard facts." Bullitt in France and Biddle in Poland did not commit to paper blunt promises of almost immediate military aid in the event of war but such was the gist of their private conversations. The record of them is to be found in the Potocki papers. But that is not the only source. There are records and memoirs of persons active at that time and memoranda which, though subsequently destroyed, passed among various embassies and remained in the memories of those who had seen them. Nor were all the details always officially and duly dated and numbered and sent to the State Department whence they could only with the greatest difficulty have been abstracted and destroyed. There is also the fact that much diplomacy is carried on at diplomatic receptions. One ambassador buttonholes another and behind a potted palm with a glass of champagne in one hand and a cigarette in the other, the two settle the fate of the world without the knowledge of the politicians or the public which elects them. Such contacts and negotiations might be reported by, say, Ambassador Bullitt directly to the White House by means of a scrambled telephone or in private letters which never pass through the records of the State Department. Such will clearly never appear in the National Archives. In these circumstances it may be asked how I could ever have had much knowledge of the schemings and plottings. Well, it happened that the London embassy served as a sort of unofficial clearing house for most of the diplomatic activities of the United States, at least in the European theater. Thus there was much flotsam and jetsam floating around in the form of memoranda and inter-departmental communications. Conversations were often overheard and they afforded insights into attitudes and activities which were a legitimate part of diplomacy but which ordinarily could only be gleaned from personal memoirs and seldom found their way into official records. Many memoranda were circulated to a few foreign service officers with instructions to read and then destroy.

Would it be reasonable to expect that a written record exists of the commitment to provide military aid which Roosevelt gave to Neville Chamberlain prior to the latter's announcement to Parliament in March 1939, that Britain and France would provide military assistance to Poland if she were attacked? Such a commitment was in fact given by Roosevelt to the British ambassador in Washington and a telephonic confirmation was sent to Ambas-

sador Kennedy in London. Next, a memorandum to this effect was circulated among some of the higher ranking foreign service officers and there the matter ended. Subsequent correspondence is quite clear on this point: there would have been no Franco-British guarantee to Poland and no World War II without the previous American commitment. Chamberlain and Daladier were fully aware of the limitations placed on the President by the Constitution with respect to the use of the armed forces, but such were the powers of persuasion of the ambassadors Biddle and Bullitt that the Polish and French governments were convinced Roosevelt could do whatever he wished. The British end of it was taken care of in Washington in direct communications between Roosevelt and the British ambassador.

The exclusive reliance on archival material is the essential weakness in the position taken by two historians who have written on the "Kent case." Warren Kimball and Bruce Bartlett in the fall 1981 issue of *Diplomatic History* wrote an account which purports to deal with the pre-war commitments of Roosevelt to Churchill. *Pre-war*, in this case, relates to the entry of the United States into World War II, not the beginning of hostilities in September 1939. These two academicians have poked around in the National Archives and looked at the Roosevelt-Churchill exchange of cables which have so far been published, and have come to the conclusion that there is nothing much there worth making a fuss over. But who has been making a fuss? Not I. This is the first time I have made any public statement on the subject. I do so now because the dire consequences of Roosevelt's "errors of judgment" (if indeed they were "errors" and not deliberate policies) are now so obvious that even egg-head academics like Kimball and Bartlett can no longer ignore their realities.

For far too long academics have been hypnotized by the Churchill-Roosevelt correspondence and have ignored everything else in the diplomatic correspondence between the United States and foreign countries during this time-period. They have ignored, too, statements by quite prominent persons who were privy to the facts. *The Forrestal Diaries* was published several years ago and the editors, Walter Millis and E.S. Duffield, were at liberty to edit out or to keep in anything they wished. No one would have been any the wiser had they omitted to include the direct quotation of a remark made by Neville Chamberlain to Joseph Kennedy to the effect that "America and the world Jews" had forced Britain into the war. This of course is a very accurate statement but it is not to be found in the numbered telegrams and dispatches from the London embassy to Washington. The record is most probably in the private papers of Joseph Kennedy and it is unlikely that these will see the light of day until such time as politicians and histo-

rians no longer fear to tell the truth because of the menaces of the Jewish Anti-Defamation League. In the meantime I am making use of the incident to illustrate my contention that not all accurate history is to be located in government files and archives. To aver that it is so is to declare that governments do not lie—at least that democratic governments do not. The fact is, while they may possibly lie less often, and certainly less crudely, than the Bolsheviks, they nevertheless lie when it suits them to do so. One has only to consider the case of the Potocki papers mentioned earlier. The White House and the State Department declared them to be forgeries. Today, all reputable historians recognize them to be genuine.

What do Kimball and Bartlett know about the British plans to invade Norway or about the manner in which the United States government encouraged these plans on the grounds that something had to be done to raise the morale of allied troops in garrisons whose unrelieved idleness might eventually lead to insubordination and even mutiny? The "phony war" had been on for over half a year. The British plan was to draw out the German fleet for battle. Churchill and others believed that the best way to do this would be to challenge the Germans in an open competition to invade Norway. Churchill was typical of that breed of wartime leaders who always fight the previous war. He had a fanatical and absolute conviction that the British fleet could solve all of Britain's problems if only the Germans could be induced to come out and give battle. He was to be proven wrong in this as in so much else.

The plan connived between Britain and the United States was for the British to make overt and easily detectable plans for the invasion of Norway. The United States diplomatic service would assist in spreading the news all over Europe in such a way that the Germans could not possibly fail to learn about it. The Germans did take the bait and organized their own expedition to take Norway before the British could get there. There was a naval engagement in the Skagerrak, the body of water which separates Denmark from Norway, and a number of warships of Germany's rather small navy were sunk. But not enough to prevent the troopships from landing their contingents and taking over the country while meeting very little resistance.

The United States' role in this British ploy was certainly not consistent with neutrality either under domestic or international legal definition. But Roosevelt had already told the American public that they were not required to be "neutral in thought." So perhaps *the diplomatic service* was authorized to be one jump ahead of the public and to be un-neutral in deed as well. I do not know of any actual written instructions on record. By this, I mean direct instructions from the State Department. I personally saw,

however, some of the numerous memoranda sent out from the London embassy to various heads of missions around Europe. These gave very specific instructions to make known as widely as possible, without arousing suspicion, the British plan to invade Norway. Some of the envoys "not in the know" actually queried these instructions as they could not understand why they were required to make public supposedly secret British military plans. I do not know how their doubts were resolved but the scheme did work. Perhaps in addition the scrambled telephone from the White House was used to tell the ambassadors what to do. The professors will probably ignore this little item as being "undocumented" since they have a naive confidence in what the State Department says as "fact," and their blind reliance on the National Archives is tantamount to saying "We only publish what the State Department says we can." But then one wonders why they have gone beyond the department's press release of 2 September 1944 which purports to be the last word on the "Kent Case," although it is actually a hodge-podge of innuendo, smears and lies. It is the sort of thing that is made to order for the Anti-Defamation League. It could have been composed by one of their agents "planted" in the State Department. For example: it alleged that I had come to the attention of the British because of my acquaintance with Anna Wolkoff, a refugee from Bolshevik Russia. According to the police, this woman had a channel of communication with Germany of which she was making use. The implication was clear: I was supposed to be transmitting information to Germany through Wolkoff. At the time that the State Department issued the press release referred to above, it already had at its disposal a copy of the transcript of my trial which had been held in 1940. In that transcript the Director of Public Prosecutions stated: "Kent did not have any knowledge of the transmission (of a certain document) nor does the prosecution contend that he acted in concert with his co-defendent, Anna Wolkoff, in this matter." But even when possessed of this information, the State Department still disseminated the innuendo that I had contacts with Germany and some vaguely defined "confederates" who were attempting to communicate with Germany, with which Britain was then at war. But the British prosecuted me only for having in my possession "documents which might be useful to an enemy"—*not* for transmitting them knowingly to any foreign power. This, of course, did not prevent the American "free" press from printing banner headlines about me such as "He Helped The Nazis." In this connection, I have in my possession the sworn testimony of a certain Nathan Perlmutter, dated 6 November 1963, taken as a deposition in a libel suit filed by me against the Miami *Herald* and the St. Petersburg (Florida) *Times*. Perlmutter had taken to the two newspapers some material

which the Anti-Defamation League had about me, and was instrumental in having the Miami *Herald* print a defamatory article which occasioned the libel suit. Incidentally, Perlmutter did such a good job that he is now National Director of the Anti-Defamation League at its headquarters in New York. At the time I had dealings with him, he was head of the Florida chapter of that organization.

Professors Kimball and Bartlett in their article on the "Kent Case" have argued that, as regards the question of Roosevelt's role as a warmongering conspirator, there was "nothing in it." I would reply that Roosevelt was probably the most shameless liar ever to occupy the White House and that his lies have done what is probably irreparable harm to this nation. Curiously enough, those who were on the spot at that time in London—namely, British Military Intelligence, Scotland Yard, and others—held an opinion different from Kimball and Bartletts'. Otherwise, there would never have been a "Kent Case" at all.

On 8 June 1940, a couple of weeks after my arrest, Ambassador Kennedy informed the State Department by cable that:

> The appropriate authorities inform me that investigation of the case in which Kent is involved is being carried out with great care and has involved an enormous amount of labor. A final decision as to whether Kent is to be prosecuted may be expected within the next ten days at the latest.

On 11 June these same British authorities informed Kennedy that:

> Those who have investigated the matter say that these papers disclose the existence of a traitorous and dangerous conspiracy to assist the enemy. The persons concerned as defendants are Miss Wolkoff, Capt. Archibald Ramsay, M.P., his wife Mrs. Ramsay, Mrs. Christbel Nicholson (wife of an admiral) and Mr. Tyler G. Kent. All except the last named are British subjects. It is of the greatest importance, if indeed not essential, to the presentation of this case that a representative of the United States Embassy should attend the trial to give certain formal evidence.

The following significant words are something to which the two professors might usefully give attention before concluding that the "Kent Case" is a non-story.

> It is appreciated that neither the State Department nor the Foreign Office would be prepared to contemplate at the present time the public discussion of the documents in question. It is thought, however, that some documents could be selected from the whole which, while sufficiently proving the case against the defendants, could properly be produced in court.

But if Kimball and Bartlett are correct, why all the secrecy? Why was the consent of Prime Minister Winston Churchill required before the proceedings could be initiated? As Kennedy informed the State Department on 6 July 1940: "The British prosecutors further inform [Kennedy] that the proposed defendents take the view that they are safe from trial and punishment because neither of the governments concerned dare have these matters discussed in public."

What was it that they dared not discuss in public? That is really the crux of the case. The real reason why I was tried and sentenced to a prison term in England and not tried in the United States is clear from the following statement of the British authorities, made to Joseph Kennedy: "The documents in question would certainly be produced only behind locked doors in a cleared court. Not only would the press be ordered not to publish their contents. No press man would be present."

There you have it in a nutshell. The British, like the Bolsheviks, still have secret trials—a relic from medieval times when an absolute monarch was able to dispose of his enemies on the quiet without any public outcry being possible, since the facts would not be known until it was too late to do anything about it. In 1776, the thirteen colonies revolted against Britain precisely to do away with such Star Chamber proceedings as well as much else repulsive in the form of British government. Nonetheless, the United States government in the year 1940 was very glad to make use of Britain's Star Chamber practices against one of its own citizens—for reasons of "cover-up" and secrecy.

In September 1944, in response to a certain interest in my case which had been aroused in Congress and led to questions being addressed to the Secretary of State concerning my imprisonment, the State Department issued a lengthy press release which purported to be the final word on the subject. I shall quote that part which deals with the reasons for turning me over to the British for a secret trial, since that action is prohibited by the 6th Amendment to the Constitution. The 6th Amendment requires that a criminal trial be "speedy and public." My trial was neither. This is what the State Department had to say: "The interest of Great Britain was pre-eminent . . . and all the evidence, witnesses, *et cetera*, were available to the British Courts." The true reasons were set forth in messages to and from the embassy and the State Department during the weeks following my arrest. I have already indicated what they were. So dense, in fact, were the clouds of secrecy around my case (in the "pre-eminent interest of Great Britain") that when the New York *Times* applied to see the transcript of the stenographic notes of the trial they were informed by the London embassy in these terms:

> The British Government is unable to give its consent in writing for an inspection by the New York *Times* of a copy of the transcript in our possession or in the possession of any other. It would require an *Act of Parliament* and not even the Home Secretary could waive the restriction.

Such an elaborate web of secrecy cast over an incident by the government principally involved and whose "interests are pre-eminent," (Great Britain) has a tendency in the long run to defeat its purposes because it piques the curiousity of historians to get at the facts. The case must be recognized as truly extreme when even the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, had to give his consent before the trial could proceed, and the records could not be made public without an Act of Parliament.

And now I should like to discuss the case of Franklin Gowen, Second Secretary of the American Embassy in London. I call him a Knight of the Table Round, for he demonstrated such devotion to the British—above and beyond the call of duty—that if the British did not reward him with (at least) a knighthood then they were remiss in their duty to one of their best agents in the United States foreign service. I have already mentioned that he accompanied the police whey they broke into my flat and arrested me. He was later to appear in court and give testimony against me which he did with enthusiasm and evident glee. On the day of my arrest, Gowan undertook to impersonate me and accept any telephone calls which were made to me at the Embassy. He would then pass on the names and addresses of the callers to the British police, more specifically to Sir Norman Kendall, head of Scotland Yard. Sir Norman said to Ambassador Kennedy:

> In cases of this kind we cannot take anything for granted. To ascertain who were Kent's friends and *their* friends, where they met and what they did, is of the utmost importance. We can't thank Ambassador Kennedy enough for his invaluable help in this case.

On the same day, Galahad-Gowan undertook what must rate as one of the most bizarre activities in the history of the United States Foreign Service. During the afternoon he intercepted a phone call from a certain person who asked that I come to Number "X," Chesham Street. Gowan immediately recruited a Scotland Yard police detective and they both went to the address given. There, in the darkness of the blackout, he was handed a note by an unknown person which asked that Kent go to a certain restaurant to meet some people. Gowan gave the note to the police and then, later that night, returned to the Chesham Street address "to keep watch on the house itself" and to report the numbers of the license plates of any cars that might stop there.

Before the interception of the note, Gowan had taken off his overcoat and lent it to the policeman so that it would cover his uniform and thus not alarm the person being talked to. Here we have the extraordinary spectacle of an American Foreign Service officer working with the British police and even providing one of them with a disguise in order to entrap British subjects. Gowan had long since done all that could be required of him in the matter of my arrest. Now he was extending his sleuthing to the possible arrest of Britons whom he did not know and with whom he had no connection whatsoever. Although the foregoing is mainly of anecdotal interest, it does serve to illustrate how closely Americans and British officials worked together *before* America entered the war, and to what extent they were willing to ignore legality in such cooperation. I am quite sure the Foreign Service regulations do not include a requirement that an officer of that service do the dirty work of the police of a foreign country with regard to the citizens of that country.

It must have been Sir Galahad-Gowan's "finest hour." This paunchy, balding non-entity of a Second Secretary savored it to the last drop and no doubt regales his grandchildren with the account of how he, single-handedly, broke up a dangerous spy-ring in London during the war. This alleged spy-ring to which I was supposed to have belonged was headed by Captain Archibald Ramsay, a Member of Parliament. Ramsay was subsequently described by the very prosecutor himself, Solicitor-General Sir William Jowitt, as an honorable man who would not knowingly do anything to harm his country. That did not prevent Ramsay being interned for a long period during the war although never convicted of any offense. These facts are public knowledge, yet they did not stop the New York *Times* from printing and circulating in the United States and in England libelous statements to the effect that I gave Ramsay certain vital defense information which Ramsay then took to the German embassy in Dublin for transmission to Germany. Ramsay sued the New York *Times* for libel as he was easily able to prove that he had never left Britain during the period alleged, much less visited any German embassy in Dublin or anywhere else. He won the suit. Both the New York *Times* and the author of the article, a certain Raymond Daniels, were shown up as liars.

By the time the Ramsay suit came to trial, I had already been languishing in a cell in the almost medieval Wandsworth prison in London, I had gone on a hunger strike and was at that time in the prison infirmary. One morning, I was informed that some lawyers wished to see me. Supposing them to be my own, I agreed to see them. It turned out that they represented the London offices of the New York *Times* and they wanted my help in defending the newspaper against Ramsay's suit. They showed me

the defamatory article and I saw immediately that it was a tissue of lies. I promptly told them to get out—which they did. Later, I learned that the article had been inspired by a Colonel William Donovan. Donovan was later appointed head of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) at the behest of Frank Knox, Secretary of the Navy. Knox was one of those turncoats from the Republican Party who had leaped on the Roosevelt bandwagon. I was, of course, deprived of civil rights as a convicted person and could not sue on my own behalf, but the New York *Times* studiously avoided commenting on the "Kent Case" thereafter.

One thing that the embassy correspondence made abundantly clear was the truly desperate situation of the British after the Norwegian fiasco and on the eve of their tremendous defeat at Dunkirk whence the entire British army fled for their lives, leaving their weapons in the hands of the enemy. The British knew where they stood and told Roosevelt all about it. They knew that without direct military participation by America, they were finished in the war. All the pompous talk about "give us the tools and we'll finish the job" was pure Churchillian bluff and the British knew it. But it provided Roosevelt with the propaganda weapon which enabled him to induce Congress to pass the "Lend-Lease" bill making the United States, in contravention of international law and our neutrality statutes, the "Arsenal of Democracy." After the Norwegian fiasco, Winston Churchill became prime minister. This he did primarily because he could boast of his American connections and was able to convince those hidden powers behind the scenes that he was the best bet to get America into the war. Embassy correspondence left no room for doubt that after Dunkirk the policy of the British was to hang on by the skin of their teeth until Roosevelt could get America into the war. He did his best in the Atlantic but Hitler declined to take the bait. The British had, perforce, to wait until Roosevelt could get us in by the back door at Pearl Harbor. On several occasions we find Churchill threatening Roosevelt with the prospect of British surrender or, at least, some compromise with the Germans unless America came to the rescue and *soon*. These messages are in sharp contrast to the public image of Churchill in his jump suit, cigar cocked in one corner of his mouth, prating that "We shall never surrender. We shall fight them on the beaches. We shall fight them in the streets," *etc.* All that was for the public morale and we must all admit that Churchill was a fine actor. Perhaps he took lessons from Vic Oliver, his Jewish son-in-law who was a vaudeville comic.

The British had not forgotten the role played by the sinking of the *Lusitania* in getting the United States into the earlier war. We now know the real story from British sources. A well-researched book entitled *The Lusitania* published in England a few years ago

proved that the ship with its American passengers was *deliberately* sent to its doom by the British authorities. They knew positively that a German submarine was lying in wait for the liner off the south coast of Ireland, and purposely failed to inform the *Lusitania's* captain. The hulk of the *Lusitania* lies in comparatively shallow water and divers have examined it. Its holds have been shown to have been filled with contraband of war and its decks equipped with defensive weapons. This made it a warship and a legitimate target for the German submarine. Knowing the psychological effect that the sinking of the *Lusitania* had on public opinion in the United States and how the loss of American lives helped so greatly in gaining support for intervention, the British lost no time in contriving a similar incident very early in World War II. This was the sinking of the liner *Athenia* on 4 September 1939 when the war was only twenty-four hours old. Some thirty American lives were lost. Howver, the anti-war sentiment was so strong this time that the ploy failed in its object. The public more or less shrugged off the incident, saying in effect: "Stay out of the war zones if you don't want to get hurt."

Now some very mysterious correspondence came to my notice at that time. It was from the office of the Naval Attache, a Captain Kirk. By close questioning, Captain Kirk had been able to ferret out of the British an admission that the *Athenia* might have been sunk on their own orders. Not that it was sunk by a torpedo from a British submarine. Rather, it was done by one of the two Polish submarines which escaped from the Germans and had come to England where they were under the command of the British Admiralty. It is true that a German U-Boat commander was forced by torture and intimidation to confess at the Nuremberg trials that he sank the *Athenia*. But such a confession is as credible as all the other confessions extorted by similar means.

By now it should be obvious to the reader that the screen of secrecy which surrounded my case was for a long time virtually impenetrable. Were the "Kent documents" of a vital military nature? Did they involve information about troops or armaments? The answer is provided by the words of the judge, Mr. Justice Tucker. Judge Tucker, in passing sentence, said: "I am taking into consideration that the documents in question did not involve any military matters." But if not military matters, then what? Obviously, there remained only political matters. And these were then so sensitive that the British told Kennedy that there could be no public discussion of the documents in question. What then was their nature, which could justify my trial and imprisonment? The United States was *not* at war at that time. The people of this country were overwhelmingly in favor of neutrality. This, in fact, was the great frustration which Roosevelt had to suffer. He had been a rabid Anglophile all his life. As early as 1915, when he

was Assistant Secretary of the Navy, he expressed great anxiety in his personal correspondence lest he should commit some unneutral act. His more limited authority at that time compelled him to put a tight rein on his natural sympathies which were entirely pro-British. This is the key to understanding the diplomatic activity of the United States in the immediate pre-war period—this, and a certain mental disease which had become endemic in the English-speaking world. I shall call this disease "Fabianism." Its symptoms are a total inability to assess correctly the true nature of Marxism and the aims, purposes and methods of Marxist countries, which at that time meant the Soviet Union.

The Fabian Society was founded in England in 1884 principally by Sidney and Beatrice Webb and George Bernard Shaw. It was a group of intellectuals whose declared purpose was to correct the evils of British industrial society such as child labor, slave wages for women and very bad living conditions for workers in general: all very worthy aims. But these high-minded reformers all lost their senses when the Russian Revolution occurred in 1917. They made utter fools of themselves by holding up before the world this bloody, Jewish-inspired and -led regime as an example for all humanity. It was the characteristic failure of the intellectuals everywhere and in most fields, but especially in the socio-political. Intellectuals rely on the printed word and disparage common-sense conclusions based on direct observation of the facts.

The Webbs authored a ponderous tome entitled *Soviet Russia: A New Civilization*. For all the time it took putting it together, it was worse than useless as a guide to understanding Bolshevik Russia. The Webbs amassed millions of words from official Soviet reports, from the laws and the 1936 Constitution ("the most democratic in the world") and presented this to the public as the definitive account of modern Russia. Anyone who, like myself, had resided even for short time in the "Workers' Paradise" knew perfectly well that laws and constitutions meant absolutely nothing there as far as protecting human rights was concerned. That nation was—and is—ruled by a power elite which is outside and above the law much as its predecessor the Tsarist regime was. They do whatever they wish without the least regard for what the law might say. Yet even now, when the truth about Russia is widely known throughout the world, thanks to Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and others, there are many academics in this country who still teach the Marxist line to the young and vulnerable. Harvard University is a hotbed of such teaching. Did Roosevelt become enamoured of Fabianism at Harvard? After all, he said to Congressman Martin Dies:

> There is nothing wrong with Communists in this country. Several of the best friends I have are Communists. I do not regard the Communists as any present or future threat to our country. In fact I look upon Russia as our strongest ally in the years to come.

He said the same thing to Cardinal Spellman, as recorded in the prelate's biography. This unadulterated Fabianism is the key to Roosevelt's mentality and explains his mishandling of our foreign relations. It also explains his legacy with which we are now burdened.

Americans are a pragmatic people, or so they like to regard themselves. That is to say, they prefer to look at the world with a practical eye rather than through the colored glasses of ideology. Most readers will know something about the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). It is a sort of extra-governmental, semi-secret organization having on its membership list many leaders in the fields of education, finance, communications, politics, etc. Its purpose is to formulate policy and then pass that on to the government for implementation. To this end, it is able to place many of its members in high offices in various departments of government. What better source for an authoritive statement on America's attitude to the European war of 1939, then, than the CFR? This is what the CFR had to say:

> The German strategical objective in this war is the destruction of the power of the British Navy. To maintain communications with Dominions, to insure the food supply, and to save herself from becoming literally a third-rate power, Britain must maintain the supremacy of that fleet. No compromise between these alternatives is possible. For the British Commonwealth of Nations this war is a matter of life or death . . . It is an important fact, however, that in protecting its own interests it [the British Navy] has simultaneously served to protect American interests too. . . .
>
> The existence of Nazi Germany, with its power, its ambition and its momentum is the *fundamental factor* in the foreign relations of the United States. Against it the defenses of this country must be expanded; against it *diplomacy must be turned*; against it friends must be won and kept. And against the possibility of its success on the continent of Europe the unity of the United States must be re-established.

These words were written in 1938 and 1939. It could not be put more plainly. These peace-time statements were not made by some two-bit journalist. They came from the government behind the government; from the people who plan and (albeit in slightly veiled language) call for war and make it happen. Come what may, says the CFR, a German victory cannot be tolerated. First of all diplomacy must be used against Germany, which is what I saw happening. Surely, the drastic action of the authorities in the

"Kent Case" is a little more comprehensible in the light of these CFR statements. But even now, after 43 years, the veil of secrecy has not been entirely stripped away. What element of national security needed such drastic protection? No doubt nothing but the personal reputations of some of the protagonists.

I have spoken heretofore of the legacy of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In fact, he left several. There is the legacy of Keynesian inflationary economic philosophy—a long subject which merits a separate study. I am concerned here with the legacy of foreign policy and its conduct, and in that field I can claim some small but special knowledge.

Britain and France declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939. The ostensible reason was to honor a pledge made to Poland; the real reasons were to preserve a precarious balance of power in Europe and the dominance of the British Navy in the Atlantic. This navy, according to the CFR, was also protecting America. The CFR stated publicly in 1939 that "Nazi Germany could not under any circumstances be allowed to win in Europe." As a part of this CFR guarantee to not allow the Nazis to win, Roosevelt thought up the Lend-Lease program which had been the subject of discussion between Roosevelt and Churchill in their private correspondense for many months. Roosevelt kept stressing that he needed time to overcome the objections of Congress, and Churchill was insisting that unless something were done soon, Britain would be forced to her knees. How Roosevelt got away with the transfer of fifty destroyers to the British fleet is one of the great mysteries of the period. But he did. And this was his most overt and un-neutral interventionist action in the pre-war period. It, too, had been discussed for months between himself and Churchill. Various subterfuges were suggested by one or the other and had to be rejected as impractical. All the time, the emphasis was on how to circumvent Congress and the neutrality laws. Eventually, Congress was successfully browbeaten or cajoled into agreeing to Lend-Lease, which meant giving away billions of dollars worth of American wealth. The destroyer deal, however, was done without the participation of Congress at all and the government of laws went out the window.

Before this, the slow work of diplomacy had been pursued for months, even years, lining up coalitions by promises of aid which was not forthcoming in time to be of any use to those to whom it had been promised, namely Poland, France and Britain.

Nobody in a position of authority in this country expected the rapid and early military defeats of France and England. Dunkirk changed the whole picture. The United States government had been expecting a nice, leisurely trench war of attrition with the British fleet gradually blockading Germany to death. Hence Lend-Lease and the destroyers deal. These were the tools with which

the British were going to "finish the job" according to Churchill. But the loss of the British army at Dunkirk really threw the Anglo-American ranks into a panic. The unbelievable had happened. Germany had won the war in Europe—something the CFR said must never be allowed to happen.

Within a few days after the British debacle at Dunkirk I was arrested; I stayed in jail until November 1945. The impression was given that I and my friends were in some measure responsible for the collapse at Dunkirk. In retrospect, it now seems as if the drastic action taken against me, Captain Ramsay and several others might well have been for propaganda purposes as much as anything else. The British had suffered one of the worst military defeats in their history and their troops were straggling back across the Channel without as much as a rifle. Under such circumstances it is good for home-front morale to attribute disasters to the activities of a fifth column. Ramsay, myself and the others seemed to the British to constitute some sort of "fifth column." The stolid British can become hysterical at times and at this point they did so with good reason. Later, as the hysteria died down, Captain Ramsay was released from detention although I was incarcerated to the bitter end—and beyond. The Solicitor-General who prosecuted Ramsay said (as already quoted) that Ramsay was an honorable man who would never willingly have done anything which might harm his country. Since Captain Ramsay was my principal contact in London in the 1940s, an impartial observer might reasonably suppose that my motives were also honorable.

Some people have asked the quite legitimate question: Why, if my motive was to keep the United States out of the war, did I show the documents to *British subjects*? The answer is simple and straightforward. Ramsay and the members of his Right Club all knew that the principal warmongers in Britain were the Churchill-Eden-Duff Cooper-Vansittart gang, and it was our joint intention in our amateurish way to undermine Churchill's position in Parliament by making use of some of the American documents I had in my possession. This, it was hoped, could be done through the assistance of Captain Ramsay who was, after all, a Member of Parliament. We all understood that the Western democracies could not emerge from this war as genuine winners. The only real winner would be Bolshevik Russia. The British Empire would be no more and England would sink to the level of a third class power—as it has. I also felt sure that the threat to the security of the United States would be magnified a hundredfold. Curiously, our great leader Roosevelt did not understand this. But a lowly employee of the Foreign Service did; like Cassandra, he prophesied never to be believed. Americans are supposed to prefer hard facts to theories. Here is a hard fact. In 1939, the

United States defense budget stood at slightly over one billion dollars. The 1983 budget calls for expenditures for defense amounting to 221.1 billion dollars. If we halve the last figure to allow for inflation we still have expenditures one hundred times greater today than before World War II. Since it is to be assumed that the United States does not now plan to launch a major war of aggression against any power, this 221 billion dollar sum is to defend ourselves against attack by the only plausible external enemy—Soviet Russia. By demanding the total destruction of Germany and "unconditional surrender," Roosevelt established Soviet Russia as a world power without any counter-balance on the vast Eurasian heartland. But he had said that he saw nothing wrong with Communists or Communism and that Russia was our natural ally. Was it deliberate or was it only a colossal error of judgment? Most people would feel that a man who occupies the White House is not entitled to make mistakes on such a grand scale nor to play fast and loose with his nation's security. Lesser mortals can plead ignorance but the President has information on the world situation pouring into his office twenty-four hours a day. He cannot legitimately plead that he didn't know, that nobody told him.

How then did my friends and I know, in the tumultuous months of 1940? History, not I, will answer that.

Today, the ruling circles in this country recognize that none of the touted war aims were achieved. Hence they are not discussed. Instead there is a constant harping on the *moral* triumphs allegedly achieved. Hence the incessant ravings about the supposed Nazi atrocities, about the Belsens and Dachaus, the Buchenwalds and Auschwitzes—above all, the "Holocaust." These are all deliberate diversions—red herrings dragged across the trail to obfuscate the facts of life. And those facts are that this country is in constant mortal danger from the overwhelming power of Soviet Russia. This is the Frankenstein monster created by Roosevelt and loosed upon the world. We live with this Roosevelt legacy each and every day. A Soviet base ninety miles from our shores is only one of the negative strategic incursions we have to deal with. Any possible moral basis for World War II was completely destroyed when Americans allied themselves with Soviet Russia, of which it may well be said that there has never been a viler regime in modern history. If the existence of concentration camps within a country is a sound basis for waging war against that country, then we should have been at war with Soviet Russia since about 1922, and with Britain since the turn of the century for it was the British who first employed them during the Boer War, interning thousands of civilians, many of them women and children who died in large numbers due to the unsanitary conditions within the camps.

The hoax of the twentieth century, as the title of Dr. Butz's book on the "Holocaust" goes, is the smoke-screen to conceal the utter failure to achieve the professed war aims of Roosevelt, Churchill and the CFR. Now the Zionist Establishment will continue to have a free hand to commit genocide in the Near East and smear any person in this country who dares to dispute the orthodoxy or point out the *real* results of World War II. And the Establishment is so besmirched with the responsibility of failure that it needs the Jewish publicists and news media to destroy anyone who has the temerity to ask awkward questions. The horrid prospect looms of having to say: "Maybe we were wrong." A further prospect then looms: "Maybe Hitler was right." But such confessions buttered no parsnips in the harsh judgments of the post-war world. They were not accepted as excuses at Nuremberg under the new ex-post-facto "law" worked out by the United States and their Soviet allies. The new basic law of nations requires only one clause, very simply: "It pays to be on the winning side."

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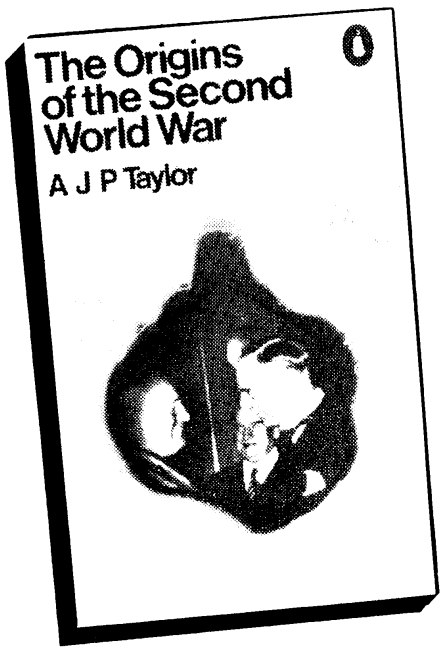


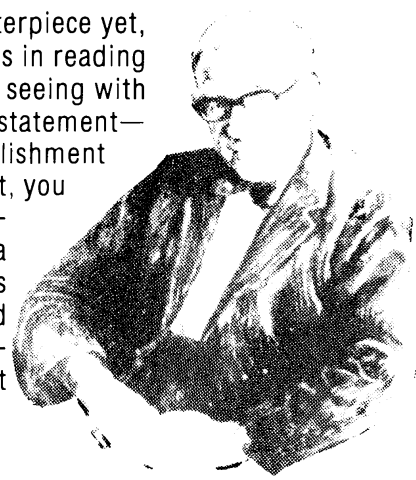
"...A DISGRACE..."

—Hugh Trevor-Roper

CONSIDERING THE REVIEWER, we can't think of a remark that better recommends A.J.P. Taylor's classic, brilliantined, and quite unflaggingly controversial study of the diplomatic tragedy of errors that caused Europe to "slither over the brink" a second time. **This book forthrightly challenges the myth of Hitler's war guilt, of his "plan" for aggression.** It rakes over the coals in scathing fashion the entire structure of Hitlerian "demonology" that was laboriously set up at the Nuremberg Trial as an explanation for what happened, and as a hoped-for guide to historical writing about the origins of the war for all time.

First published 22 years ago, Taylor's **The Origins of the Second World War** is the **only** thoroughly revisionist work on this subject to have attained a place even on the **Establishment's** list of "must reading." Few undergraduate history students get their degrees without having had to buy, read and be tested on this book. Seminars are devoted to it. Debates are organized around it. Classroom topical schedules become a shambles when students go "overtime" for days discussing it. Some professors seem to have devoted their whole careers to knocking it down. Anthologies have been published about it. Where other books on this subject appear and shortly disappear, this one has **staying power**. There are two basic reasons why: Taylor is a brilliant writer who **entertains** as well as informs; his case is so persuasive and his reputation already so pronounced (he is the most widely-read serious English historian of modern times) that the book just couldn't and can't be ignored—even by Establishment paladins like Trevor-Roper, and others of like ilk who have variously called it "**perverse,**" "**dangerous,**" and a "**whitewash of Hitler.**" Taylor cannot get away with this one! The fuss among the historians has served to make Taylor very happy, and to keep his book in print.

If you haven't encountered A.J.P. Taylor's masterpiece yet, you are missing out on one of the great experiences in reading history. If you are a revisionist, you will delight in seeing with what supreme power—yet also ease and understatement—Taylor blithely walks along toppling one Establishment myth about Hitler after another. (Revisionist or not, you will also probably find things of your own to disagree with. Taylor can, and usually does, hold a controversial opinion on **anything**.). One thing is for sure: if you truly want to understand how and why war broke out in 1939, you cannot ignore Taylor's classic contribution. The anti-revisionist Establishment certainly hasn't.



A.J.P. TAYLOR

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President Roosevelt and The Origins of the 1939 War

DAVID L. HOGGAN

Editor's Note: This article is excerpted from David L. Hoggan's book The Forced War: The Origins and Originators of World War II. The complete book will be published in hardcover by the Institute for Historical Review in December 1983. Professor Hoggan's treatment of the Roosevelt/American role in his book is not limited to one section, but runs rather through the course of the narrative as that role develops. Here we have culled the pertinent sections, providing a running commentary (italicized) which fills in the chronological gaps and gives the essential background, as presented by the author, of European events against which Roosevelt moved. The treatment of President Roosevelt in The Forced War begins in earnest in the year 1938, and that is where this article takes up the story. Crucial both to Professor Hoggan's portrayal of Roosevelt and his general thesis as to war responsibility is his assertion that in October 1938, after the Munich conference, personal control of British foreign policy passed from Prime Minister Chamberlain to his Foreign Minister, Lord Halifax, who thereupon waged an unremitting campaign to force a war with Germany.

The Secret War Aspirations of President Roosevelt

The attitude of President Roosevelt and his entourage was perhaps more extreme than that of the British leaders, but at least the American President was restrained by constitutional checks, public opinion, and Congressional legislation from inflicting his policy on Europe during the period before World War II. A petulant outburst from Assistant Secretary F.B. Sayre, of the

American State Department, to British Ambassador Sir Ronald Lindsay on September 9, 1938, during difficult negotiations for an Anglo-American trade treaty, illustrated the psychosis which afflicted American leaders and diplomats. Sayre later recalled: "I went on to say that at such a time, when war was threatening and Germany was pounding at our gates, it seemed to me tragic that we had not been able to reach and sign an agreement." To imagine Germany pounding on the gates of the United States in 1938 is like confusing *Alice in Wonderland* with the *Bible*.

Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., telephoned Paris on March 14, 1938, to inform the French that the United States would support and cooperate with a Socialist measure of the Blum Popular Front Government to control, and, if necessary, to freeze foreign exchange in France. This would have been a drastic measure contrary to the international system of arbitrage and to the prevailing international financial policy of the United States. Morgenthau was eager to see Leon Blum retain the premiership in the hope that he would plunge France into conflict with Hitler. He had no compunctions about taking this step without informing either the United States Congress or American business leaders. Leon Blum, the Socialist, did not dare to go that far, and his Government fell because of an inadequate fiscal policy.

The German leaders correctly believed that the unrestrained anti-German press in the United States was profoundly influencing both public and private American attitudes toward Germany. Goebbels told United States Ambassador Hugh Wilson on March 22, 1938, that he expected criticism, and "indeed, it was inconceivable to him that writers in America should be sympathetic with present-day Germany because of the complete contrast of method by which the (German) Government was acting." On the other hand, he objected to libel and slander and to the deliberate stirring up of hatred. Wilson confided that it was not the German form of government which was at issue, but that "the most crucial thing that stood between any betterment of our Press relationship was the Jewish question." Ribbentrop was able to challenge Wilson on April 30, 1938, to find one single item in the German press which contained a personal criticism of President Roosevelt. He also intimated that the situation could be otherwise.

In early 1938, Jewish doctors and dentists were still participating in the German state compulsory insurance program (*Ortskranken-kassen*), which guaranteed them a sufficient number of patients. Wilson relayed information to Secretary of State Hull that, in 1938, 10% of the practicing lawyers in Germany were Jews, although the Jews constituted less than 1% of the

population. Nevertheless, the American State Department continued to bombard Germany with exaggerated protests on the Jewish question throughout 1938, although Wilson suggested to Hull on May 10, 1938, that these protests, which were not duplicated by other nations, did more harm than good. The United States took exception to a German law of March 30, 1938, which removed the Jewish church from its position as one of the established churches of Germany. This meant that German public tax receipts would go no longer to the Jewish church, although German citizens would continue to pay taxes for the Protestant and Catholic churches. The situation established by this new law in Germany was in conformity with current English practice, where public tax revenue went to the Anglican Church, but the Jewish churches received nothing.

On March 14, 1938, Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles complained to Polish Ambassador Jerzy Potocki about the German treatment of the Jews and praised Poland for her "policy of tolerance." Potocki, who knew that current Polish measures against the Jews were more severe than those in Germany, replied with dignity that "the Jewish problem in Poland was a very real problem." It is evident that the Jewish question was primarily a pretext of American policy to disguise the fact that American leaders were spoiling for a dispute with Germany on any terms. In September 1938 President Roosevelt had a bad cold, and he complained that he "wanted to kill Hitler and amputate the nose."

Perhaps frustration and knowledge of the domestic obstacles confronting his own policy increased President Roosevelt's fury. Jules Henry, the French Charge d'Affaires, reported to Paris on November 7, 1937, that President Roosevelt was interested in overthrowing Hitler, but that the majority of the American people did not share his views. French Ambassador Saint-Quentin reported on June 11, 1938, that President Roosevelt suddenly blurted out during an interview that "the Germans understand only force," and then clenched his fist like a boxer spoiling for a fight. He noted that the President was fond of saying that if "France went down, the United States would go down." Apparently this proposition was supposed to contain some self-evident legalistic-moralistic truth which required no demonstration.

Ambassador Saint-Quentin noted that the relations between President Roosevelt and William C. Bullitt, were especially close. This was understandable, because Bullitt was a warmonger. Bullitt was currently serving as United States Ambassador to France, but he was Ambassador-at-large to all the countries of Europe, and he was accustomed to transmit orders from Roosevelt to American Ambassador Kennedy in London or American

Ambassador Biddle in Warsaw. Bullitt had a profound knowledge of Europe. He was well aware that the British did not intend to fight in 1938, and that the French would not fight without British support. He improved his contacts and bided his time during the period of the Austrian and Czech crises. He prepared for his role in 1939 as the Roosevelt Ambassador *par excellence*. He could accomplish little in either year, because the whole world knew that the President he was serving did not have the backing of the American people for his foreign policy.

In the wake of the peaceful settlement of the Sudeten-German problem in Czechoslovakia at the Munich conference, and after a German-backed Czech-Polish agreement on the transfer of ethnic Polish territory (Teschen) to Poland, Polish Ambassador to Germany Lipski meets with German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop at Berlin in November 1938, to discuss the Danzig and Corridor questions. Little is accomplished, as Lipski carries out Polish Foreign Minister Beck's instructions not to engage in realistic discussion. But, bearing in mind Hitler's recent generous proposal of a German guarantee of Poland's Western border (provided that the Danzig question, with the question of free and sovereign German access to Danzig across the Corridor, is settled), Lipski ostensibly leaves room for a possible agreement on German road and railway access across the Corridor.

Potocki Reports from America

Lipski returned to Poland on November 22, 1938, to discuss the Danzig situation. His assurance to Ribbentrop about the superhighways and the railways had been a mere ruse designed to appease the Germans. The Polish leaders agreed that no concessions would be made to Germany either at Danzig or in the Corridor transit question. The affable manner of Ribbentrop, despite the adamant Polish stand on Danzig, impressed the Polish leaders. Beck speculated that Danzig might not be the issue after all which would produce a conflict between Germany and Poland. He suggested that Hitler might be allowing Ribbentrop unusual liberty in the Danzig question to see what he could accomplish. Lipski's attitude was similar to Beck's. His latest conversation with Ribbentrop had caused him to modify his earlier opinion that Germany would never retreat at Danzig. He suggested that the injury done to German relations with the United States by the anti-Jewish policy might affect German policy toward Poland.

Lipski tended to exaggerate the effects on German foreign relations of the demonstrations against the Jews in Germany on November 10, 1938. He prediced that a Franco-German declaration of friendship, which had been discussed by Hitler and the

French leaders since the preceding month, would never be signed because of the negative French reaction to the anti-Jewish demonstrations. This prediction proved to be false, and Ribbentrop signed the declaration at Paris on December 6, 1938.

Lipski and the other Polish diplomats were influenced in their judgment of this question at the moment by a report which had been telegraphed by Count Jerzy Potocki from Washington, D.C., on November 21, 1938. The Polish Ambassador was informed by William C. Bullitt, the American Ambassador to France who was visiting in the United States, that President Roosevelt was determined to bring America into the next European war. Bullitt explained to Potocki at great length that he enjoyed the special confidence of President Roosevelt. Bullitt predicted that a long war would soon break out in Europe, and "of Germany and her Chancellor, Adolf Hitler, he spoke with extreme vehemence and with bitter hatred." He suggested that the war might last six years, and he advocated that it should be fought to a point where Germany could never recover.

Potocki did not share the enthusiasm of Bullitt and Roosevelt for war and destruction. He asked how such a war might arise, since it seemed exceedingly unlikely that Germany would attack Great Britain or France. Bullitt suggested that a war might break out between Germany and some other Power, and that the Western Powers would intervene in such a war. Bullitt considered an eventual Soviet-German war inevitable, and he predicted that Germany, after an enervating war in Russia, would capitulate to the Western Powers. He assured Potocki that the United States would participate in this war, if Great Britain and France made the first move. Bullitt inquired about Polish policy, and Potocki replied that Poland would fight rather than permit Germany to tamper with her western frontier. Bullitt, who was strongly pro-Polish, declared it was his conviction that it would be possible to rely on Poland to stand firmly against Germany.

Potocki incorrectly attributed the belligerent American attitude solely to Jewish influence. He failed to realize that President Roosevelt and his entourage considered World War I to have been a great adventure, and that they were bitter about those Americans who continued to adopt a cynical attitude toward American militarism after President Roosevelt's quarantine speech in 1937. President Roosevelt had been one of the few advocating permanent peacetime military conscription in the United States during the complacent 1920's. Such factors were more than sufficient to prompt Roosevelt to adopt an aggressive attitude toward Germany. He had no strong pro-Jewish feelings; he jokingly said at the 1945 Yalta Conference that he would like to give the Arabian leader, Ibn Saud, five million American Jews.

The Jewish issue was mainly a convenient pretext to justify official American hostility toward Germany, and to exploit the typical American sympathy for the under-dog in any situation.

Potocki overestimated the Jewish question because of his own intense prejudices against the Jews, which were shared by the entire Polish leadership. He was highly critical of the American Jews. He believed that Jewish influence on American culture and public opinion, which he regarded as unquestionably preponderant, was producing a rapid decline of intellectual standards in the United States. He reported to Warsaw again and again that American public opinion was merely the product of Jewish machinations.

Though the unresolved issues between Germany and Poland over Danzig and the Corridor begin to come to the fore, in early 1939 the problem of Czechoslovakia—the rump, polyglot state created at Versailles, comprising many central European ethnic populations—continues to dominate European affairs. Hitler backs the aspirations for independence from the Czechs of the Slovaks, the largest minority within the artificial Czech state.

Roosevelt Propagandized by Halifax

Halifax continued to maintain a detached attitude toward the Czech problem, and he secretly circulated rumors both at home and abroad which presented the foreign policy of Hitler in the worst possible light. Hitler would have been condemned by Halifax for anything he did in Czechoslovakia. Had he decided to throw German weight behind the Czechs in an effort to maintain Czech rule over the Slovaks, he would have been denounced for converting the Czech state into a German puppet regime. His decision to support the Slovaks could be denounced as a sinister plot to disrupt the Czecho-Slovak state which the Munich Powers had failed to protect with their guarantee.

The situation is illustrated by the message which Halifax dispatched to President Roosevelt on January 24, 1939. Halifax claimed to have received "a large number of reports from various reliable sources which throw a most disquieting light on Hitler's mood and intentions." He repeated the tactic he had used with Kennedy about Hitler's allegedly fierce hatred of Great Britain. Halifax believed that Hitler had guessed that Great Britain was "the chief obstacle now to the fulfillment of his further ambitions." It was not really necessary for Hitler to do more than read the record of what Halifax and Chamberlain had said at Rome to recognize that Great Britain was the chief threat to Germany, but it was untrue to suggest that Hitler had modified his goal of Anglo-German cooperation in peace and friendship.

Halifax developed his theme with increasing warmth. He claimed that Hitler had recently planned to establish an independent Ukraine, and that he intended to destroy the Western Powers in a surprise attack before he moved into the East. Not only British intelligence but "highly placed Germans who are anxious to prevent this crime" had furnished evidence of this evil conspiracy. This was a lamentable distortion of what German opposition figures, such as Theo Kordt and Carl Goerdeler, had actually confided to the British during recent months. None of them had suggested that Hitler had the remotest intention of attacking either Great Britain or France.

Roosevelt was informed by Halifax that Hitler might seek to push Italy into war in the Mediterranean to find an excuse to fight. This was the strategy which Halifax himself hoped to adopt by pushing Poland into war with Germany. Halifax added that Hitler planned to invade Holland, and to offer the Dutch East Indies to Japan. He suggested to Roosevelt that Hitler would present an ultimatum to Great Britain, if he could not use Italy as a pawn to provoke a war. Halifax added casually that the British leaders expected a surprise German attack from the air before the ultimatum arrived. He assured Roosevelt that this surprise attack might occur at any time. He claimed that the Germans were mobilizing for this effort at the very moment he was preparing his report.

The British Foreign Secretary reckoned that Roosevelt might have some doubt about these provocative and mendacious claims. He hastened to top one falsehood with another by claiming that an "economic and financial crisis was facing Germany" which would compel the allegedly bankrupt Germans to adopt these desperate measures. He added with false modesty that some of this "may sound fanciful and even fantastic and His Majesty's Government have no wish to be alarmist."

Halifax feared that he had not yet made his point. He returned to the charge and emphasized "Hitler's mental condition, his insensate rage against Great Britain and his megalomania." He warned Roosevelt that the German underground movement was impotent, and that there would be no revolt in Germany during the initial phase of World War II. He confided that Great Britain was greatly increasing her armament program, and he believed that it was his duty to enlighten Roosevelt about Hitler's alleged intentions and attitudes "in view of the relations of confidence which exist between our two Governments and the degree to which we have exchanged information hitherto." Halifax claimed that Chamberlain was contemplating a public warning to Germany prior to Hitler's annual Reichstag speech on January 30, 1939. This was untrue, but Halifax hoped to goad Roosevelt into

making another alarmist and bellicose speech. He suggested that Roosevelt should address a public warning to Germany without delay.

Anthony Eden had been sent to the United States by Halifax, in December 1938, to spread rumors about sinister German plans, and Roosevelt had responded with a provocative and insulting warning to Germany in his message to Congress on January 4, 1939. Halifax hoped that a second performance of this kind would be useful in preparing the basis for the war propaganda with which he hoped to deluge the British public. He did not achieve the desired response to this specific proposal. Secretary of State Hull explained, in what a British diplomat at Washington, D.C., jokingly described as "his most oracular style," that the Administration was blocked in such efforts at the moment by hostile American public opinion. Halifax was comforted on January 27, 1939, when he was informed officially that "the United States Government had for some time been basing their policy upon the possibility of just such a situation arising as was foreshadowed in your telegram." This was another way of saying that the New Deal, which had shot the bolt of its reforms in a futile effort to end the American depression, was counting on the outbreak of a European war.

Halifax learned on January 30, 1939, that leading American "experts" disagreed with a few of the details of his analysis of the Dutch situation. They expected Hitler to mobilize his forces along the Dutch frontier and to demand the surrender of large portions of the Dutch East Indies without firing a shot. The ostensible purpose of this Rooseveltian fantasy would be to "humiliate Great Britain" and to "bribe Japan." This dispatch was not sent on April Fool's Day, and it was intended seriously. It enabled Halifax to see that he had pitched his message accurately to the political perspective of Roosevelt, Hull, and their advisers. Anyone in their entourage who did not declare that Hitler was hopelessly insane was virtually ostracized. Roosevelt hoped to have a long discussion with Joseph Stalin at Teheran in 1943 about the alleged insanity of Adolf Hitler. He was disappointed when Stalin abruptly ended this phase of the conversation with the blunt comment that Hitler was not insane. It was like telling the naked Emperor that he was wearing no clothes. It was evident to Stalin that Roosevelt was a clever and unscrupulous politician who lacked the qualities of the statesman.

On January 4, 1939, President Roosevelt tells Congress that U.S. neutrality policy must be re-examined. The next day, Beck and Hitler converse at Berchtesgaden. Hitler stresses German-Polish cooperation, pointing to that of the previous year over the Czechoslovakian crisis (and noting that he would have preferred a

settlement in which only Poland, Germany, and Hungary—the countries with ethnic interests within Czechoslovakia—would have participated, rather than the Great Power convocation at Munich). Though quite cordial, the conversations are unproductive in terms of concrete progress toward resolution of the Danzig and Corridor problems. But Hitler at least makes clear his attitude that Danzig would return to Germany sooner or later. Beck hides his strong private aversion to this idea behind a friendly, if reserved, mask. He does reassure Hitler of a dependable (that is: suspicious) Polish attitude toward Russia. Privately, Beck is less interested in preventing a short-range setback or even defeat for Poland than in promoting the ruin of both Germany and Russia. His attitude reflects a Polish mystique arising from World War I: a defeat of Russia by Germany, and of Germany by the Western Powers, would permit a Great Poland to emerge from the ashes of a momentary new Polish defeat.

The Poles Regard America

The Poles also attached great importance to the role of the United States. They knew that American intervention had been decisive in World War I. They knew that the American President, Franklin Roosevelt, was an ardent interventionist. Roosevelt differed markedly from his predecessor, Herbert Hoover, after whom many streets were named in Poland in gratitude for his post-World War I relief program. Hoover had been favorably impressed by a conversation with Adolf Hitler on March 8, 1938, and he was a leader in the struggle against current American interventionism. The Poles knew that Hoover, who was wrongly accused of being the father of the American economic depression, that began in 1929, had little influence on American policy in 1938. They knew that President Roosevelt was eager to involve the United States in the struggles of distant states in Europe and Asia. American opponents of Roosevelt who opposed his foreign policy were disdainfully labelled isolationists.

The Poles did not trouble themselves about the reasons for President Roosevelt's interventionism. They were too realistic to assume that he necessarily had any legitimate reasons. They were content to accept the convenient explanation of Count Jerzy Potocki, the Polish Ambassador to the United States. Potocki claimed that President Roosevelt's foreign policy was the product of Jewish influence. This was untrue, but there was little interest in Poland for an elaborate analysis of American policy. The surveys sent by the Polish Foreign Office to missions abroad rarely mentioned the American scene. The Poles recognized the importance of the American position, but they were content to leave the problem of promoting American intervention in Europe to their British friends.

Beck discussed the European situation after his return to Warsaw with American Ambassador Anthony Biddle. Biddle reported to the American State Department on January 10, 1939, that Beck was not enthusiastic about his recent trip to Germany. The most he was willing to say about his conversation with Hitler was that it had been "fairly satisfactory," and that Hitler had promised him that there would be no "surprises." Beck confided to Biddle that Hitler was disappointed about President Roosevelt's address to Congress on January 4, 1939, which had been bitterly hostile toward Germany. Biddle noted that Beck was complacent about Anglo-French relations and concerned about current Polish relations with France. Biddle reported that "Beck emphasized that Poland and France must meet at an early date to clarify their joint and respective positions *vis-a-vis* Germany. They were now both in the same boat and must face realities." It was evident from the general nature of Beck's remarks that the official Polish attitude was incompatible with the successful negotiation of an agreement with Germany.

American Ambassador Bullitt in Paris reported on January 30, 1939, that he discussed recent German-Polish negotiations with Juliusz Lukasiewicz, the Polish Ambassador. Lukasiewicz admitted that Danzig and the Corridor transit problems had been discussed. He informed Bullitt that Beck had warned Hitler that Poland might act in Ruthenia. Bullitt also discussed general German policy with Lukasiewicz, French Foreign Minister Bonnet, and British Ambassador Sir Eric Phipps. The three men agreed that Hitler would not deliberately make war on any country in 1939. These views were an interesting contrast to the alarmist reports which Halifax had sent to President Roosevelt a few days earlier.

American Charge d'Affaires Gilbert reported from Berlin on February 3rd that Hitler's basic policy in the East was friendship with Poland. It seemed certain to Gilbert that Beck would be willing to allow the return of Danzig to Germany in exchange for a 25-year Pact, and for a German guarantee of the Polish Corridor. Gilbert noted that official German circles were quite open in announcing that the reunion of Memel with East Prussia was planned for the Spring of 1939. The Germans believed that the Lithuanians, British, and French would agree to this development without any ill-feeling.

On March 14, 1939, the artificial Czech state disintegrates. The Slovakian parliament proclaims its independence. Hungarian troops enter the Ruthenian region to protect and embrace the ethnic Hungarian population there. The Czechoslovakian president, Emil Hacha, requests an immediate meeting with Hitler. On March 15th, Hacha signs an agreement with Hitler establishing

the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia on the former Czech territory. German troops move in that day, and Germany accepts the protection of Slovakian independence. Britain initially accepts the new situation, reasoning that her guarantee of Czechoslovakia given after Munich is rendered invalid by the internal collapse of the Czech state. But on March 17th, Chamberlain—egged on by Halifax and Roosevelt—announces a stunning reversal of British policy: the end of the peace policy ("appeasement") with Germany. From now on Britain will strenuously oppose, even to the point of war, any further territorial moves by Hitler, no matter how justified.

America and the British Policy Reversal

William C. Bullitt, the leading American diplomat in Europe, was pleased by the reversal of British policy in March 1939. He knew that President Roosevelt would welcome any British pretext for a war in Europe. Ambassador Bullitt sent a jubilant report from Paris on March 17, 1939, in which he triumphantly concluded that there was no longer any possibility for a peaceful diplomatic settlement of European differences.

Halifax welcomed the enthusiastic support for a change in British policy which he received from the American Government after March 15, 1939. The collapse of Czecho-Slovakia produced a greater immediate outburst of hostility toward Germany in Washington, D.C., than in any other capital of the world. German Charge d'Affaires Thomsen reported to Berlin that a violent press campaign against Germany had been launched throughout the United States. There was much resentment in American New Deal circles when Sir John Simon delivered a speech in the British House of Commons on March 16, 1939, in support of Chamberlain's conciliatory message on the previous day. The Simon speech produced a vigorous American protest in London on March 17, 1939. Halifax replied by promising President Roosevelt that the British leaders were "going to start educating public opinion as best they can to the need of action." This is a different picture from the one presented by Gilbert and Gott [in their book *The Appeasers*] to the effect that "for most men the answer was simple" after the events at Prague on March 15, 1939. Roosevelt warned Halifax that there would be "an increase of anti-British sentiment in the United States" unless Great Britain hastened to adopt an outspokenly anti-German policy.

Roosevelt requested Halifax to withdraw the British Ambassador from Germany permanently. Halifax replied that he was not prepared to go quite that far. British opinion was less ignorant than American opinion about the requirements of diplomacy, and Halifax feared that a rude shock would be produced if

the British copied the American practice of permanently withdrawing ambassadors for no adequate reasons. He promised that he would instruct Henderson to return to England for consultation, and he promised that he would prevent the return of the British Ambassador to Germany for a considerable time. He also promised that Chamberlain would deliver a challenging speech in Birmingham on the evening of March 17, 1939, which would herald a complete change in British policy. He assured Roosevelt that Great Britain was prepared at last to intervene actively in the affairs of Central Europe.

Halifax requested President Roosevelt to join Great Britain in showing "the extent to which the moral sense of civilization was outraged by the present rulers of Germany." He knew that this lofty formulation of the issue would appeal to the American President. Roosevelt was satisfied with the response from Halifax. He promised the British Foreign Secretary that he would undermine the American neutrality legislation, which had been adopted by the American Congress, with New Deal approval, in response to pressure from American public opinion. Halifax also received the promise that American Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau would take vigorous new steps in his policy of financial and economic discrimination against Germany. Halifax was greatly encouraged by the support he received from President Roosevelt for his war policy.

Polish Foreign Minister Beck received an assurance from Juliusz Lukasiewicz and William Bullitt on March 19, 1939, that President Roosevelt was prepared to do everything possible to promote a war between the Anglo-French front and Germany. Bullitt admitted that he was still suspicious about British intentions, and he feared that the British might be tempted to compose their differences with Germany at some later date. He promised that any such deviation from a British war policy would encounter energetic resistance from President Roosevelt. Bullitt had received word from Premier Daladier that the British were proposing an Anglo-French territorial guarantee to Rumania, and the American diplomat welcomed this plan.

Bullitt informed the Poles that he knew Germany hoped to acquire Danzig, and that he was counting on Polish willingness to go to war over the Danzig question. He urged Lukasiewicz to present demands to the West for supplies and other military assistance. Lukasiewicz told Bullitt that Poland would need all the help the West could possibly offer in the event of war. Bullitt said that he hoped Poland could obtain military supplies from the Soviet Union, but Lukasiewicz displayed no enthusiasm for this possibility. He warned Bullitt that it was too early to predict what position Russia would take in a German-Polish dispute. Bullitt

recognized from this remark that Lukasiewicz was assuming that Soviet policy toward Poland would be hostile. It was equally clear that Bullitt recognized the military hopelessness of the Polish position, if the Soviet Union did not aid Poland in a conflict with Germany.

Halifax attempts to create a broad anti-German front by proposing an alliance to include Britain, France, Poland, and the Soviet Union. But the Poles are as distrustful of the Soviets as they are of the Germans, preferring to maintain a maximum independence of Soviet influence and protection from possible future Soviet moves. Nevertheless they continue in a bellicose anti-German attitude—though Germany is the only nation that could possibly offer them realistic protection from the Soviets.

Poland Rejects Halifax's Soviet Alliance Plan

Halifax discussed his alliance project with American Ambassador Kennedy on March 22, 1939, and he complained at great length about the negative attitude of Beck toward an alliance front to include both Poland and the Soviet Union. He intimated that he was resolved to continue his anti-Germany policy, and that hostilities in Europe might be expected fairly soon. He was convinced that the British Navy was more than adequate to cope with German naval forces. He urged Kennedy to request President Roosevelt to concentrate the American fleet at Pearl Harbor, as an appropriate gesture to protect Australia and Singapore from a possible Japanese attack, after the outbreak of war in Europe. Halifax admitted at last that the story of a German threat to Rumania could not be substantiated, but he assured Kennedy that [Rumanian Ambassador] Tilea's statements at London had served a useful purpose.

The moderate attitude of Hitler produced no effect on Beck on the eve of Lipski's return to Berlin. Beck told American Ambassador Biddle an outrageous falsehood about Hitler's policy toward Poland on March 25, 1939, which was a fitting prelude to his later public distortions about German policy. Beck claimed that Hitler had demanded the settlement of the Danzig question by Easter, which was only a few days away. In fact, Hitler had never set a time limit on the duration of his negotiation with Poland. Biddle reported with satisfaction on March 26, 1939, in a terse telegram: "Poland today on war footing having achieved same swiftly but quietly."

It was difficult under these circumstances for Ribbentrop to maintain the impression that peaceful negotiations between Germany and Poland were in progress. The German Foreign Office was receiving a large number of reports from friendly foreign

diplomats that the British were making all possible preparations for war against Germany, and it seemed certain at Berlin that Halifax would seek to exploit the bellicose Polish attitude. American Minister Joseph E. Davies reported to Washington, D.C., from Brussels on March 30, 1939, that in Belgium the Chamberlain speech at Birmingham was regarded as a disaster which had reversed the favorable prospects for peace in Europe.

French Ambassador Leon Noel reported to Paris that he had attended a diplomatic dinner on the evening of March 27, 1939, at which Beck, Count Michal Lubienski, and the Polish Chief of Staff, General Stachiewicz, were present. Noel complained that the Polish leaders deliberately avoided any reference to the obviously unsatisfactory recent negotiations with Germany, and that they appeared to be distracted and preoccupied with private problems. Beck was also vague in his conversations with American Ambassador Anthony Biddle, but he told Biddle on the evening of March 28th that the Polish partial mobilization was "a firm answer to certain suggestions made by Berlin."

Lukasiewicz informed Beck from Paris that he was continuing to collaborate closely with American Ambassador Bullitt. Lukasiewicz was repeatedly informed by Bullitt of the conversations between the British leaders and American Ambassador Kennedy at London. It was obvious to Lukasiewicz that Bullitt continued to distrust the British. The American Ambassador assured him that the United States would be able to exert sufficient pressure to produce a British mobilization at the peak of the next crisis. Lukasiewicz also suspected that part of this distrust reflected a childish desire on the part of Bullitt to exaggerate the importance of his own role on the European scene.

Polish Ambassador Edward Raczynski reported on March 29, 1939, that the principal fear in Great Britain seemed to be that a German-Polish agreement would be reached despite the Polish partial mobilization. The British were arguing that such an agreement would be especially dangerous because it might lead to the rapid disintegration of Soviet Russia. The Polish Ambassador had learned that American Ambassador Kennedy was personally distressed by the war policy of the British leaders, and by the support for this policy which came from President Roosevelt. Raczynski warned Beck that Kennedy appeared to be privately somewhat out of step with Bullitt in Paris and Anthony Biddle in Warsaw, but that otherwise he was reluctantly carrying out his instructions from President Roosevelt to warn the British that their failure to act would produce dire consequences. Raczynski added that he received repeated requests from the British to reassure them that Poland would not accept the German annexation of Danzig. The Polish diplomat noted that it was difficult to convince the British that Poland was really willing to go to war over the Danzig issue.

American Ambassador Bullitt did what he could to support the Polish position at Paris. Lukasiewicz informed Bullitt on March 24, 1939, that Poland would reject the pro-Soviet alliance plan and press for a bilateral alliance with Great Britain. Bullitt assured Lukasiewicz that the British would agree to such an alliance. The Polish Ambassador admitted that he did not trust the British, and he asserted that the cynical English leaders were quite capable of leading Poland into an untenable position and deserting her. He knew that Bullitt shared this attitude to some extent. Lukasiewicz reminded Bullitt of British participation in the partition of Czechoslovakia in 1938. He feared that Great Britain would offer to support Poland, and then insist on Polish concessions to Germany. He knew that until recently the British leaders had favored Polish concessions to Germany, and he was not certain that there had been a complete change in their attitude.

Bullitt used many arguments to reassure the Polish Ambassador. He declared that he was in complete agreement with every aspect of Beck's stand in the alliance question, and he regarded the creation of a solid Anglo-French-Polish front without the Soviet Union as the best thing which could possibly happen. He claimed that Halifax was not very serious about his Four Power Pact offer, and that it was mainly a gesture to increase British prestige and to appease the French. He said that the British leaders hoped that there would be a war between Germany and Russia, but that they were not eager to make commitments to the Soviet Union.

Bullitt told Lukasiewicz on March 25, 1939, that he had instructed American Ambassador Kennedy at London to tell Chamberlain that the United States was in full sympathy with the Polish position in the alliance question. Bullitt contacted Kennedy again on March 26th. Kennedy was instructed to tell Chamberlain that the United States hoped that Great Britain would go to war with Germany if the Danzig dispute produced an explosion between Germany and Poland. Bullitt told the Polish Ambassador that he was confident that the British response to these suggestions would be favorable. Halifax, of course, was not displeased to know that he had unconditional official American support for his war policy. Lukasiewicz told Bullitt on March 26, 1939, that Lipski would reject the German proposals at Berlin the same day. He praised Bullitt as "an industrious friend who at many complicated points resolved our situation intensively and profitably."

On March 22nd, Germany and Lithuania reach an agreement for the return to Germany of the ethnic German Memel district. The next day, Poland orders a partial mobilization. It follows in the last week of March with a boycott campaign against ethnic

German businesses, and a declaration that any German-caused change in the international ("Free City") status of Danzig will be regarded as an act of war. Acts of violence against ethnic Germans in Poland increase. Britain announces a doubling in size of the home army. On March 30th, several days before the planned visit of Beck to London, Halifax decides to give a "blank check" guarantee to Poland, supporting it in the event of any action which the Polish government considers a threat to its independence. Chamberlain is to announce the guarantee in the House of Commons on March 31st.

The British Guarantee and America

Halifax had made an epochal decision, and he was impatient to bring his new policy into the open. He decided not to wait until the arrival of Beck in London on April 3, 1939, before assuming a public British commitment to Poland. He wired [British Ambassador to Poland] Kennard on March 30, 1939, that a guarantee to Poland would be announced in the British Parliament on the following day. He added that this guarantee would be binding without commitments from the Polish side. He attempted to place the responsibility for his extraordinary impatience on President Roosevelt. He informed Kennard with a touch of ironical humor that the American Embassy had bombarded him with assertions that Ribbentrop was urging Hitler to invade Poland before the British assumed any commitment. This was a transparent pretext to rationalize a rash policy. It was true that Bullitt at Paris was for immediate British action, but the American diplomats at Berlin hoped that Great Britain would adopt a policy of caution and restraint. American Charge d'Affaires Geist suggested from Berlin that it would be wise for Great Britain to avoid placing obstructions before German eastward expansion. No one could have been more emphatic in deploring a hasty British guarantee to Poland.

Halifax carefully avoided giving the impression that he believed the alleged story about Ribbentrop's aggressive intentions. He did repeat the old argument that President Roosevelt and the United States of America would become hostile to Great Britain if she did not go to war against Germany. The constant reiteration of this theme by Bullitt at Paris was undoubtedly useful to Halifax. It also enabled him to shift part of the responsibility for his various moves to the United States, although in reality President Roosevelt was unable to play an active role in Europe at this stage. The official position of the United States was governed by neutrality legislation from the 1935-1937 period, and it is impossible, regardless of the attitude of Roosevelt, to saddle the United States with the responsibility for the moves which Halifax made. The decision of Halifax to confer an advance guarantee wiped

out the hopes of Hitler that personal negotiations between Halifax and Beck would end in disagreement. The friction between the two men was a very real thing when Beck came to London, and it is possible that their negotiation would have ended in failure had it not been for the previous British guarantee.

Beck arrives in London on April 3rd. He accepts the British guarantee, and offers a reciprocal promise of Polish intervention on the side of Britain in the event of war between Britain and Germany. But Halifax wants more: a wide-ranging Polish commitment to go to war with Germany if Germany attacks Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, or Denmark. Beck balks at this request for what amounts to "permanent intervention," as at renewed suggestions for a pro-Soviet alliance against Germany. The British leaders suggest that Beck transform the Polish-Rumanian alliance (an anti-Soviet pact in effect) into an anti-German pact. Beck refuses to ignore the dangers from the Soviet Union to Poland and her neighbors' Eastern borders, and rejects this proposal.

The British Propagandize Beck

The British leaders did not like Beck's response. They wished him to think exclusively in terms of destroying Germany, and to forget other considerations. In other words, they wished his thinking to be more similar to that of President Roosevelt in the United States. They began to employ the same propaganda methods on Beck which they used with Roosevelt. They began to suggest a number of hypothetical situations with their usual formula of saying "this may sound fantastic, but" what would you do in such and such a case. Beck put a stop to this by declaring bluntly that "it was against the tradition of the Polish Government to express definite opinions about third countries without directly consulting them."

Chamberlain switched from hypothetical fantasies to rumors, and he declared that he had heard Germany was planning a sudden invasion of Hungary. Beck did not like this English style of rumor-mongering. He was convinced that this assertion of alleged German designs against Hungary was entirely false. He wished that the British leaders would desist from their efforts to alarm him in this way. He assured the British leaders with studied emphasis that he was entirely convinced Germany was not planning any political action outside her present frontiers except at Danzig. This was an effective method of reminding them that Poland was indispensable to their plan of launching a British preventive war against Germany.

Theo Kordt of the German Embassy in London was able to telegraph information to Berlin on April 5, 1939, about the principal topics which had been discussed between Beck and the British leaders. Chamberlain admitted in the House of Commons on the following day that there had been no attempt to limit what might constitute a threat to Polish independence. The final word on this matter was left entirely to the Poles. Beck admitted to American Ambassador Kennedy before he left London that the British leaders had complained about the allegedly uncoooperative Polish attitude. He also claimed that he had been able to diminish this dissatisfaction somewhat in the last conversations. Beck referred cleverly to his "old friend America" and his "new friend Britain." He confided to Kennedy that he was "more than happy" to have the British blank check. He assured the American Ambassador that he did "not want to be the direct cause of plunging the world into war." This was encouraging, but Beck deprived the statement of any real meaning by admitting that he had no concrete plan to preserve the peace. Indeed, it may be safely assumed that Beck's statement to Kennedy was entirely for the record.

Kennedy talked with Halifax on April 6th. The British Foreign Secretary admitted that Beck was definitely opposed to a Russo-Polish understanding. Halifax believed that he deserved a vacation after the work of the past three weeks. He told Kennedy that Chamberlain was leaving for Scotland on the evening of April 6th, and that he was going home to Yorkshire the following morning. The Poles had their blank check, and a separate British approach to Russia would be the next step. The general European situation was discussed, and Halifax privately admitted to Kennedy that neither Hitler nor Mussolini wanted war.

Roosevelt's Policy and Beck

Bullitt was delighted at the opportunity to greet Beck on his return from England to the continent. He knew that this privilege resulted from the fact that he "was a strong admirer of the policy of Minister Beck" and enjoyed "friendly relations" with him. Bullitt discussed Roosevelt's policy with Beck at some length. He claimed that he and Roosevelt were much dissatisfied with both English and American public opinion at this point. Beck expressed mild surprise at this remark as far as England was concerned, and he indicated that he was satisfied with the atmosphere which he had encountered in England. He was quite unperturbed that a formal Anglo-Polish alliance had not been negotiated, and he observed with satisfied irony that it would require much delicacy and discretion on the part of Chamberlain to handle the guarantee agreement other than by the standards of a

normal alliance. Beck did not believe that the British Prime Minister possessed either delicacy or discretion. Beck observed, with a knowing smile to his listeners, that Chamberlain had said he was glad Poland had come instantly to an agreement with England. This amused Beck, because Poland had been waiting over a considerable period for the English offer of an agreement.

Beck admitted that Halifax had sought to entangle him with obligations to Holland, Belgium, Denmark, and Switzerland, but he did not attach serious importance to this fact. He was more interested in speculating about the German response to his visit to England and to his acceptance of the British guarantee. He declared that the alliance with England (*sojusz z Anglia*) had dealt a real blow to Hitler's plans for a German-Polish agreement. He believed that British approval of Polish aspirations at Danzig had buttressed the Polish cause there as never before. A main topic of speculation was whether Hitler would respond to the British guarantee by denouncing the 1934 Pact with Poland.

Bullitt took his leave from Beck at Lille and returned to Paris. He sent an exuberant report to Washington, D.C., at 11:00 p.m. on April 7, 1939. He informed Roosevelt and Hull that Beck was immensely pleased by recent developments in England, and that the degree of understanding which had been achieved was quite adequate to fill Polish needs. Beck had said that he knew that Hitler would be furious. Bullitt also added with obvious satisfaction that Beck had described Ribbentrop as a "dangerous imbecile."

Poland's Use of the British Guarantee

It was likely that the Poles would seek to provoke Germany into attacking them. Unlike Germany, they could not expect to achieve any of their objectives in a major war through their own efforts. Their hope of ultimate victory rested with distant foreign powers. The Polish leaders were far more enthusiastic about a German-Polish war than Hitler ever was, but considerations of high policy suggested the wisdom of a role which was at least passive in appearance.

Poland was counting on the support of Halifax for the realization of her program at the expense of both Germany and Russia. It was conceivable that Halifax could lead Great Britain into a war which began with a surprise Polish invasion of Germany, but the Polish leaders knew that France and the United States were also of decisive importance to British policy. The Poles knew that Halifax would never support Poland unless he could drag France into war. This policy was dictated by the simple fact that Halifax did not believe Great Britain could win a war against Germany without the participation of France. The Poles also knew that it

would be difficult for President Roosevelt to arouse the American people against Germany unless it was possible to maintain that Poland was the innocent victim of German aggression.

Polish provocation of Germany after March 31, 1939, was frequent and extreme, and Hitler soon had more than a sufficient justification to go to war with Poland on the basis of traditional practices among the nations. Nevertheless, Hitler could not justify German action, unless he believed that he was prepared to meet the consequences. He hoped to avoid war with Great Britain, and he knew that he would run a grave risk of an Anglo-German war if he invaded Poland. It was for this reason that German-Polish relations became progressively worse over a long period before they produced a conflict. Hitler, who was usually very prompt and decisive in conducting German policy, showed considerable indecision before he finally decided to act, and to face the consequences. He did not abandon his hope for a negotiated settlement with Poland until he realized that the outlook for such a settlement was completely hopeless.

French Foreign Minister Bonnet is not as enthused as his allies the British over the guarantee to Poland. Learning that Marshal Smigly-Rydz, the commander-in-chief of Poland's armed forces, expressed delight at the guarantee, he fears Polish cockiness and foolhardiness now that Britain, dragging along France, stands unconditionally behind Poland whatever Poland does. Bonnet continues to desire a Western/Polish accomodation with the Soviets, fearing that a Western guarantee alone will not be enough to stop any Hitler moves for Danzig and the Corridor. All this is communicated to the Polish ambassador at Paris, Lukasiewicz. Marshal Smigly-Rydz proclaims with satisfaction to assembled Polish diplomats that an immediate war with Germany is quite possible, and that such a war would mean the end of Germany.

Bullitt, the French, and the Americans

Lukasiewicz was less sanguine than Smigly-Rydz about the position of the Western Powers following the British guarantee. He discussed the situation with American Ambassador Bullitt on April 9, 1939. He said that he hoped France would attack Germany from Belgium in the event of war, but he was pessimistic about the future course of French policy. Bullitt and Lukasiewicz also discussed their recent meeting with Beck. The American Ambassador told Lukasiewicz that he had given President Roosevelt extensive information about Beck's analysis of the situation. Beck had claimed that basically Hitler was a timid Austrian who might be expected to avoid a war against determined and strong

opponents. He said that "it should be obvious now to Hitler that threats to Poland would get Germany nowhere." These exuberant remarks seemed less convincing to Lukasiewicz after his conversation on the previous day with Bonnet.

Bullitt was dissatisfied with the attitude of the French leaders, and he was inclined to blame what he considered the unwarranted complacency of American public opinion. He complained to President Roosevelt in a report on April 10, 1939, that the American public was not aware of the alleged direct threat to the United States from Germany, Italy, and Japan. He hoped that Roosevelt could do something to arouse the American people. His complaint was the decisive factor in persuading President Roosevelt to deliver sensational and insulting public notes to Mussolini and Hitler on April 15, 1939, after the Anglo-French guarantees to Rumania and Greece. Bullitt complained that [French Premiere] Daladier was unresponsive to the attempt of Lukasiewicz to secure the same blank check from France which had been presented to Poland by England. Kennedy reported to Roosevelt from London on April 11, 1939, that Halifax was still pretending to entertain an idealistic hope for peace. Kennedy naturally supposed that it might be worthwhile for the British Foreign Secretary to announce to the world that peace was still possible, but Halifax claimed that to do so would convince everyone that he was "burying his head in the sand." These remarks illustrate the method by which Halifax sought to convince people that he was merely the prisoner of larger events.

The Roosevelt Telegrams to Hitler and Mussolini

President Roosevelt was doing everything in his power to increase alarmist sentiment in the United States. He announced at Warm Springs, Georgia, on April 9th that he might not return for his annual autumn health cure, because it was quite possible that the United States and the European countries would be involved with the problems of a major European war by that time. Fortunately, much of the reaction to this statement in the United States was extremely hostile, and many foreign observers concluded that this was merely an expression of wishful thinking on the part of the American president.

The British expected some lively developments at Danzig after their guarantee to the Poles. They did not realize that Hitler had ordered the Danzig authorities to go to extreme lengths in seeking to conciliate the Poles. British Ambassador Kennard heard on April 12, 1939, that Lipski had returned to Warsaw from Berlin. He suspected that this might indicate some new developments of major importance in the Danzig question. He asked Beck for the latest news about Danzig, but he was told that nothing had changed.

The quiet at Danzig began to annoy Kennard. He called at the Polish Foreign Office ten days later to insist that Great Britain was "entitled" to receive information about any new steps at Danzig. He noted that the Germans were blaming Great Britain for the deadlock at Danzig, and he claimed that the British were "somewhat anxious" about the situation. Kennard was told once again that there was nothing to report. The Germans had requested the return of Danzig and a transit corridor to East Prussia. The Polish diplomats believed that the Germans expected Lipski to appear some day with "proposals of a detailed nature." Kennard was not told whether or not such proposals would actually be presented to the Germans by Poland.

The evasive vagueness at the Polish Foreign Office irritated Kennard. He complained to Halifax, and he noted with malicious satisfaction that there were objections to Beck in Polish financial circles. It was known in Poland that Beck had said nothing about British economic assistance during his visit to London. He had proudly emphasized Poland's alleged preparedness and strength. The Polish financiers regarded this as an unpardonable and expensive blunder.

Beck was waiting impatiently for Hitler's response to Polish acceptance of the British guarantee. He wondered if Hitler would abrogate the 1934 Pact, which Poland had violated by accepting the guarantee. He did not realize that Hitler had no intention of increasing Poland's sense of self-importance by devoting a special public message to this matter. Hitler knew that the repudiation of the Pact would be a step of major importance which could scarcely be confined to an official communique and a few reports in the newspapers. This problem was unexpectedly resolved for Hitler by President Roosevelt. The American President responded to Bullitt's suggestion for an important move to influence American public opinion by committing a colossal diplomatic blunder, which played directly into Hitler's hands.

Roosevelt disclosed to the American public on April 14, 1939, the contents of telegrams to Mussolini and Hitler which were received in Rome and Berlin on the following day. Roosevelt sought to create the impression that Germany and Italy were exclusively responsible for every threat to European peace. He presented himself as an unselfish peacemaker, who had expended much thought and energy to devise a plan to remove the danger of war. This peace plan required Germany and Italy to declare that they would abstain from war under any and all circumstances for ten to twenty-five years, and to conclude nonaggression pacts with a large number of states, of which several had no independent existence other than in the imagination of the American President.

The Roosevelt message met with a vigorous response in the German press. The German journalists wondered if the United States would agree not to attack Haiti or Santo Domingo within the next twenty-five years. Joseph Goebbels addressed three questions to the American public on April 17, 1939. He wondered if they recognized that Roosevelt was similar to Woodrow Wilson in his desire to promote a permanent policy of American intervention throughout the world. He asked if the American people recognized that Roosevelt's recent message was a new maneuver to destroy the American neutrality laws, rather than to promote world peace. He inquired if they realized that Roosevelt had advocated a common American front with Bolshevism since his Chicago Quarantine speech in October 1937. The German press announced on April 17th that Hitler would answer President Roosevelt for the German people in a speech to the German Reichstag on April 28, 1939. This step had been agreed upon by Hitler and Ribbentrop in a special conference on the previous day.

Hitler was presented with an opportunity to deal with the Poles as a secondary factor in a general situation. He planned to devote the greater part of his message on the Pact with Poland to a careful criticism of the American President and to a criticism of English policy. He also intended to abrogate the 1935 Anglo-German naval treaty. Hitler ordered the German press to abstain from criticizing the Poles during the period before he delivered his speech.

Marshal Goering was on a visit to Italy from April 14th until April 16, 1939. He had instructions from Hitler to discuss the total context of Italo-German relations. Ribbentrop was somewhat uneasy about the Goering official mission at this crucial stage when he was seeking to promote an Italo-German alliance. He was relieved to learn later that the Goering mission was completely successful.

Goering discussed the Roosevelt telegrams with Mussolini and Ciano on April 16, 1939. He told Mussolini that it was difficult to avoid the impression that the American President was mentally ill. Mussolini criticized the factual text of the telegrams. It was ridiculous to request Germany and Italy to conclude non-aggression pacts with Palestine and Syria, which were British and French mandates rather than independent states. Mussolini was interested in improving Anglo-Italian relations, and he elected to react publicly to the American challenge in a minor key. A brief initial expression of indignation was followed by Mussolini's speech at Rome on April 29, 1939. The Italian leader merely denounced the alarmists who sought to disturb international relations, and he emphasized that Italy was peacefully preparing

for the International Exposition in Rome scheduled for 1942. The privilege of delivering a detailed reply to the American President was left entirely to Hitler.

The difficult situation between Germany and Poland was a touchy subject in the conversations between Goering and the Italian leaders. Goering did not attempt to minimize the seriousness of the situation, and he complained that "England had deviated from her old line . . . (and) now obliged herself in advance to render support (to Poland, Rumania, and Greece), and that under conditions which could be determined by the other partner." Mussolini declared that in the existing dangerous situation it was important for the Axis Powers to revert to passive policies for an indefinite period. This seemed to be the only way to cope with the warlike attitude of the British Government. Goering hoped that it would be possible to settle German differences with Poland by peaceful negotiation, and he predicted that Roosevelt would have little chance for re-election in 1940 if the basic European situation remained unchanged. He admitted that an increase in provocative Polish measures against Germany might force German action against Poland. It was evident that the problem of Poland had become the problem of Europe at this hour.

Ribbentrop was encouraged by the Goering visit to press for a separate Italo-German alliance. The first official discussion of such an alliance took place in May 1938, when Hitler visited Italy. The original plan was to extend the anti-Comintern Pact into an alliance by including the Japanese. It became increasingly evident as time went on that the Japanese were unwilling to proceed this far. The Japanese feared that such an alliance might involve them in difficulties with Great Britain at a time when they were seriously committed in China. The German and Italian attempts to mediate between Japan and Nationalist China in 1938 were unsuccessful. Ribbentrop telephoned a last special appeal to the Japanese for an alliance on April 26, 1939, by way of German Ambassador Ott in Tokio. The reply to this appeal was negative as expected, and Ribbentrop proceeded to concentrate his efforts on a separate Pact with the Italians. He knew that this was a difficult project, because many Italians doubted the wisdom of an alliance connection with Germany. He also knew that the Italian leaders might seek to impose reservations which would deprive the alliance of its full effect.

The Roosevelt message of April 15, 1939, was helpful to Ribbentrop in improving German contacts with a number of countries. Ribbentrop also had the satisfaction of knowing that the British were not pleased by the crudeness of the Roosevelt telegrams. Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes, the British Charge d'Affaires in Berlin,

declared quite candidly at the German Foreign Office on April 17, 1939, that the British regarded Roosevelt's messages as "a clumsy piece of diplomacy." Bullitt at Paris attempted to appease Roosevelt by placing the unsavory situation in a positive light. He claimed that Daladier had been "encouraged" by the latest move of the American President.

Ribbentrop dispatched instructions on April 17, 1939, to the German envoys in the countries named by President Roosevelt, with the exceptions of Great Britain and France and their possessions, and Poland and Russia. The envoys were to inquire if these countries believed themselves threatened, and if their Governments had authorized President Roosevelt's plan. The German Government knew that they would receive negative answers to both questions, but in coping with Roosevelt they required explicit confirmation of these assumptions.

The British were actively pursuing their policy against Germany in the period of the Roosevelt messages. Polish Ambassador Potworowski reported to Beck from Stockholm on April 15, 1939, that the British were putting pressure on Sweden to join them in blockading Germany during a future war. The Swedes resented the British attempt to dictate their policy, but it was evident to Beck that England was preparing her future blockade of Germany with single-minded energy. Halifax was employing sphinx-like silence as a weapon against his critics in the British House of Commons. He ignored charges that Poland and Rumania would never permit Soviet troops to operate on their territory, and that the guarantees extended to those countries rendered impossible a treaty with Russia. Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs Rab Butler refused to reply to a direct question on April 18, 1939, about the role of Danzig in the British guarantee to Poland. Only one speaker in the House of Commons contended that Poland and Rumania alone had sufficient troops to cope successfully with the Germans. The House as a whole found it quite impossible to accept such a contention.

Hitler's Reply to Roosevelt of April 28, 1939

British Ambassador Henderson appeared rather pessimistic when he called at the German Foreign Office on April 27, 1939. He had returned to Berlin the previous day, after having been compelled to remain forty days in England at the insistence of Halifax, who had waited until April 20, 1939, before announcing in the House of Lords that Henderson would soon return to Germany. Henderson admitted to [German State Secretary] Weizsaecker that he had suffered a great loss of prestige at the British Foreign Office. The reaction there toward the reports he had sent home before the March 1939 Czech crisis was distinctly

negative. He complained that the task of defending recent German policy had been rendered difficult by Hitler's various earlier statements that he did not intend to seize purely Czech-populated territory. This situation was not changed by Hitler's willingness to negotiate about the current situation at Prague, because the British Government was unwilling to do so. Weizsaecker complained about the British guarantee to Poland, and he declared that it was "the means most calculated to encourage Polish subordinate authorities in their oppression of Germans there. Consequently it did not prevent, but on the contrary, provoked incidents in that country." Henderson submitted a formal statement about the British announcement of April 26, 1939, that peacetime military conscription had been established in Great Britain. The French leaders had requested the British to take this step as early as April 1938, and the German leaders had recognized for some time that the British were planning to introduce formal conscription to supplement the 1938 National Service Act. Weizsaecker told Henderson that the British note would receive formal acknowledgement, but that nothing would be done before Hitler's speech on the following day. He told Henderson that the text of Hitler's speech had gone to press. The printed text of the speech was delivered to the Diplomatic Corps in Berlin before Hitler addressed the Reichstag.

Hitler had received considerable American advice for the preparation of his speech. Some of this had reached him by way of the American press, and the rest by means of private communication to the German Embassy in Washington, D.C. The German Government was especially grateful for the suggestion of General Hugh Johnson, who had administered the National Recovery Act for President Roosevelt. Hitler had received through Hans Thomsen, the German Charge d'Affaires in Washington, D.C., the detailed suggestions of General Johnson on April 24, 1939. Hans Dieckhoff, the last German Ambassador to the United States, had also made a number of suggestions. Dieckhoff worked at the German Foreign Office in Berlin after his permanent return from the United States in November 1938. He made no secret, in his conversations with the Diplomatic Corps in Berlin, about his fear of American intervention in the event of a new European war, and he expressed this concern in his suggestions to Hitler on April 25, 1939. He was convinced that President Roosevelt intended to invade Europe with powerful American forces in the course of any future war, and he added: "I do not believe that there are elements in the USA which have courage enough or are strong enough to prevent this." Hitler was impressed by this warning, but he continued to hope for American neutrality in any possible future European conflict.

The German Foreign Office on April 27, 1939, completed the preparation of notes to be delivered at noon on April 28th in London and Warsaw. The notes announced German abrogation of the 1934 non-aggression Pact with Poland and of the 1935 Anglo-German Naval Pact. The note to the Poles, which contained a review of recent German-Polish difficulties, was more than twice the length of the note to London.

Kennard surveyed the Polish scene for Halifax on April 26, 1939. He claimed that Poland might have fought Germany without British support, but he assured Halifax that the Poles after they received the British guarantee believed it was "absolutely fundamental" to fight Germany. The German note announcing the abrogation of the 1934 Pact with Poland was delivered at Warsaw early on the morning of April 28, 1939. Beck's immediate reaction was one of unbridled scorn. He noted that the Germans still envisaged the possibility of negotiation with Poland. He declared to his subordinates that Hitler was seeking to solve his problems by diplomacy, and he vowed that he would not permit Poland to be imposed upon in this way. Beck had anticipated Hitler's address on April 28th by persuading the Polish military authorities to declare a state of alert and danger of war for the Polish Navy based at Gdynia.

French Ambassador Coulondre at Berlin discussed the situation with Lipski. The French Ambassador complained that the European scene was very confused, and that this was due in no small measure to the fact that the British in their diplomacy rushed abruptly from one extreme to another. Lipski described in detail the German offer for a settlement which Poland had rejected. Coulondre and Lipski agreed that the German offer was remarkably generous. Coulondre hoped to discover the true motive for Polish policy, but the Polish Ambassador merely mentioned that it was the avowed purpose of the Polish leaders never to be dependent on either Moscow or Berlin.

The day of Hitler's greatest oratorical performance had arrived. The German Reichstag assembled on the morning of April 28, 1939, under the presidency of Marshal Hermann Goering. It received a good-humored speech from Hitler, which American Charge d'Affaires Geist described as his "lighter vein of oratory." The Reichstag reciprocated this mood, and Geist noted that many of Hitler's remarks were received with "malicious laughter." The laughter seemed malicious to Geist because it was at the expense of the American President.

Hitler carefully left the door of negotiation open toward both Great Britain and Poland. He made it clear that he intended to remain moderate in his future negotiations with these two states.

He began his remarks by referring briefly to Roosevelt's telegram. He explained the German disillusionment in council diplomacy, which was the inevitable heritage of the deceitful mistreatment of Germany at Versailles. He had a formula which enabled Germany to participate in all negotiations with renewed confidence. The formula was a healthy determination to protect German national security. Hitler admitted that he did not believe Germany ever should negotiate again when she was helpless.

He analyzed and explained many of his principal domestic and foreign policies from 1933 until the German occupation of Prague in March 1939. He treated the prelude to the occupation of Prague at great length. He pointed out that deviations from the Munich conference program began at an early date. The Czechs and Hungarians in October 1938 appealed solely to Germany and Italy to mediate in their dispute, although at Munich it had been decided that mediation was the obligation of the Four Powers.

Hitler placed special emphasis in the latter part of his speech on the failure of the United States to emerge from the world economic depression under Rooseveltian leadership. He announced that Germany was responding to Roosevelt's initiative of April 15, 1939, by proceeding to conclude non-aggression pacts with a number of neighboring states. But he ridiculed the idea of non-aggression pacts with states on different continents, or with so-called states which actually did not enjoy independence. Ridicule was Hitler's chief weapon, next to facts and statistics, in his reply to Roosevelt. He had been genuinely amused by Roosevelt's telegram, and he succeeded in avoiding the impression that he was personally angry with the American President. Hitler made it appear that Roosevelt's constant efforts to provoke him had been mere slaps at the water of the vast Atlantic ocean which separated the two countries.

The German Chancellor paid glowing compliments to the British Empire, and he stressed his desire for permanent Anglo-German friendship. He revealed that he had decided with reluctance to abrogate the Anglo-German Naval Pact. He suggested that British resentment toward recent German foreign policy successes might have prompted the British leaders to select Poland as an obstacle to place against Germany.

Hitler devoted less than a tenth of his speech to Poland. He explained that he respected Polish maritime interests, and that this had prompted him to proceed with extreme moderation in the Corridor question. He praised Marshal Pilsudski for his desire to improve German-Polish relations. Hitler explained that in 1934 the two states had renounced war as an instrument of national policy in their relations. This was in accord with the terms of the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928. The pact had recognized one signifi-

cant exception to this declaration on behalf of Poland. The Poles were allowed to maintain military obligations to France which were directed exclusively against Germany.

Hitler mentioned the many important questions which had not been settled either by the 1934 Pact or by his own efforts for a more comprehensive German-Polish agreement. He described in detail all the points of his offer for a general settlement with Poland. He declared that the Polish counter-proposals offered no basis for an agreement. They envisaged no change in the existing unsatisfactory situation with the exception of the suggestion to replace League authority at Danzig with a German-Polish guarantee. The German Chancellor regretted Poland's decision to call up troops against Germany, and to reject the German offer. He deplored Polish acceptance of the British guarantee. He announced that Germany was no longer willing to offer her October 1938 proposals as the basis for a settlement of differences with Poland. He explained that he was abrogating the 1934 Pact with Poland, which he had offered to extend for twenty-five years, because the Poles had violated it by accepting the British guarantee. He remarked that no non-aggression pact could survive a unilateral departure from its provisions by one of the contracting parties.

Hitler declared that the abrogation of the Pact did not mean that Germany would refuse to assume new contractual obligations toward Poland. He insisted that, on the contrary, "I can but welcome such an idea, provided, of course, that there arrangements are based on an absolutely clear obligation binding both parties in equal measure." Hitler avoided treating the Polish issue as the climax of his remarks. The principal theme throughout the speech was his reply to President Roosevelt, which he sub-divided into twenty-one principal points. He created the impression that such momentous decisions as the repudiation of important pacts with Great Britain and Poland were an anti-climax compared to his debate with the American President.

The immediate reaction to Hitler's speech in Poland was hostile, although French Ambassador Noel observed that Hitler was pressing for negotiations rather than closing the door. The Polish Government announced that Beck soon would reply to Hitler in the Polish Sejm. *Polski Zbrojna* (*The Polish Army*) described Hitler's abrogation of the 1934 Pact as a tactical blunder. One Polish editor claimed that Hitler's speech gave the Polish press a moral basis to attack Germany without restraint. Wild rumors accompanied Hitler's announcement of his proposals to Poland. It was claimed in Warsaw that the Germans had demanded a superhighway corridor through Polish West Prussia over fifteen miles in width instead of the actual 5/8 mile. The

Gazeta Polska claimed that Poland would have to go further in Danzig than she had done in the past. One million Polish soldiers under arms by the beginning of summer was considered a minimum necessity. The *Dziennik Narodowy* (National Daily), a National Democratic paper, asked whether or not Danzig really wished to return to the Reich. It was suggested that possibly a handful of Nazis in the Free City were making all the noise. A rumor circulated that Poland had decided to establish a protectorate in Danzig based on the model of Bohemia-Moravia. The *Kurjer Warszawski* (Warsaw Courier) expressed the general sentiment that Hitler would not ask anything of Poland if he were really a generous person.

This time the German press retaliated. Joseph Goebbels had received permission to unshackle the press after the Reichstag speech. It was hoped that the German press, and an aroused German public opinion, would be effective weapons in inducing the Poles to negotiate under the less friendly circumstances which prevailed after the British guarantee. Goebbels himself began the campaign in *Der Angriff* (*The Assault*) with a commentary on the Polish press, entitled: "Do they know what they are doing?" The article was studded with citations, and its main thesis was that irresponsible Polish journalists were violating the precepts of Pilsudski. Hans Fritzsche, who was one of Goebbels' chief assistants in the newspaper campaign, later recalled that "each larger German newspaper had for quite some time an abundance of material on complaints of the Germans in Poland without the editors having had a chance to use this material." When the restrictions were removed, "their material now came forth with a bound."

American Ambassador Bullitt at Paris refrained from reporting the reactions of Daladier and Bonnet to Hitler's speech, but he claimed that Secretary-General Alexis Leger at the French Foreign Office had denounced Hitler's oratory in sharp terms. The German Embassy in Paris reported on April 29, 1939, that the moderate tone of Hitler's speech had produced a reassuring effect on the French leaders. Charge d'Affaires Theo Kordt also reported from London that Hitler's speech had produced a conciliatory effect in England. American Ambassador Biddle at Warsaw submitted a report to Washington, D.C., on April 28, 1939, which contained a tortuous attempt to square the circle in the face of Hitler's logic, and to support the Polish stand against Germany. German Charge d'Affaires Thomsen reported the American press reaction to Hitler's speech on April 29, 1939. He expressed his personal fear that the Western countries would make an irresistable effort to produce a new World War out of the Danzig-Corridor problem. President Roosevelt read the Eng-

lish translation of Hitler's speech on April 28, 1939. Hitler's ridicule threw Roosevelt into a violent rage and produced undying hatred of Hitler personally. This personal factor was added to the other motives which prompted Roosevelt to desire the destruction of Germany. Roosevelt had been doing everything possible to promote war in Europe before Hitler's speech. Now his personal hatred of Hitler might cause him to make some mistake even more foolish than the telegrams of April 15, 1939, to Hitler and Mussolini. He did not have the support of the American public for his war policy, and it was possible that a few more blunders might lead to the total failure of his policy.

Throughout the late Spring and into the Summer of 1939, relations between Poland and Germany worsen, as Beck—with the reassurance of the British guarantee behind him—remains adamant in not negotiating with Germany over the Danzig and Corridor questions. Militarist and expansionist sentiment runs high in Poland; prominent Polish newspapers print maps claiming that large slices of German territory in fact belong to Poland ethnically and historically. Incidents of terror against the German minority in Poland increase. German schools in Poland are closed on a large scale. Germany appeals to Poland to stop the wave of terror and violence within its borders, to no avail.

Potocki Urges a Change in Polish Policy

The Germans were forced to conclude that attempts to arouse sympathy for the German minority in the West or to exert indirect pressure on Poland were ineffective. The only alternatives were direct intervention or passive acquiescence in the final elimination of the German minority. There were many indications that hostility toward Germany was increasing simultaneously in Great Britain and the United States. Charge d'Affaires Thomsen sent word from Washington, D.C., on May 17, 1939, that President Roosevelt had told the Senate Military Affairs Committee that it would be a very good thing if both Hitler and Mussolini were assassinated. The situation in France was less unpromising. Ambassador Welczeck reported on May 20th that French Foreign Minister Bonnet had assured him on the previous day that he maintained his firm belief in the advantages of Franco-German cooperation. Bonnet declared that he was not folding his hands in his lap, and that he was working actively on a plan to preserve the peace. Official circles in the United States and Great Britain were more or less in step with Polish fanaticism, whereas France was obviously reluctant to go along with it.

Beck was faced at this time with several pleas from Polish diplomats for an understading with Germany. Polish Ambassador

Jerzy Potocki, who was on leave from the United States, discussed the situation with Beck at the Polish Foreign Office on July 6, 1939. He told Beck that he had returned to Poland with the express purpose of proposing a change in Polish policy. He complained that the United States and England were suffering from a severe war psychosis. There had been wild rumors on the ship which brought him to Europe that the Germans had occupied Danzig. He insisted that the Jews, the leading capitalists, and the armament manufacturers of the West were united in a solid front for war. They were delighted to find their pretext in the Danzig issue and in Poland's defiant attitude. Potocki added that the most repulsive factor was their complete and cold indifference to the destruction of Poland.

Potocki insisted that the Poles were merely negro slaves in the opinion of the Western profiteers. They were expected to work without receiving anything in return. He sought to appeal to Beck's vanity by claiming that the Polish Foreign Minister was the only man they feared in Poland. He argued that the United States, despite Roosevelt's fever for intervention in Europe, were actually concentrating their own imperialist drive on Latin America. He assured Beck that it would be sheer illusion to expect the United States to intervene in Europe on behalf of Poland. Potocki was forced to conclude that his eloquent arguments produced no effect on the Polish Foreign Minister.

Polish Ambassador Sokolnicki at Ankara supported Potocki in this effort. He was a close friend of Jan Szembek, and it was evident to Potocki and Sokolnicki that Szembek would accept their position if he were Polish Foreign Minister. It seemed likely, too, that Pilsudski would have rejected the Beck policy had he been alive. Sokolnicki confided to German Ambassador Papen at Ankara on July 14, 1939, that he would like to see a negotiated settlement between Germany and Poland before the Jews and the Free Masons had convinced the world that a catastrophic conflict was inevitable. The Polish diplomat added that he would be pleased to see the Anglo-Soviet alliance negotiations end in failure as soon as possible.

The American diplomats in Europe continued to oppose peace and urge war. Bullitt was disgusted with the failure of Bonnet to encourage Poland with a blank check at Danzig. He continued to warn Roosevelt that the French Foreign Minister was working for peace. Bullitt was delighted at times to find that Bonnet was pessimistic about the chances for peace. He reported with satisfaction on June 28, 1939, that Bonnet could see no way out for Hitler other than war. Biddle at Warsaw gave uncritical support to Polish policy at Danzig. He claimed in a report on July 12, 1939, that Viktor Boettcher, the unofficial Danzig foreign minister and a

close personal friend of [League High Commisionar at Danzig] Burckhardt, had become openly aggressive and was no longer a "repressed imperialist." Biddle failed to explain why a man who desired the reunion of his native city with his native country, according to the wishes of the vast majority of both parties, was an imperialist.

By the beginning of August, tensions between Germany and Poland are at the boiling point. The anti-German incidents have continued unabated. Thousands of ethnic German refugees flee Poland and are sheltered by Germany. Marshal Smigly-Rydz is more bellicose than ever. The Polish government engages in provocations and takes economic reprisals at Danzig. On August 4th, a Polish ultimatum is presented to the Danzig Senate, notifying it that the frontiers of Danzig will be closed to the importation of all foreign food products unless the Danzig government promises that it will not interfere with the activities of Polish customs inspectors. Since the Danzig populace depends in the main on food from the outside to survive, this is a formidable threat. Germany is outraged.

Roosevelt Responds to the Crisis of Early August

American Ambassador Bullitt at Paris informed President Roosevelt on August 3, 1939, that Beck was predicting that an intense and decisive phase of the crisis between Germany and Poland might occur before August 15, 1939. President Roosevelt knew that Poland was obviously to blame for the crisis which began at Danzig on August 4th, and he was alarmed at the prospect that the American public might learn the truth about the situation. This could be a decisive factor in discouraging his program for American military intervention in Europe. He instructed Under-Secretary Sumner Welles on August 11, 1939, to order American Ambassador Biddle to advise the Poles about this problem. President Roosevelt urged the Poles to be more clever in making it appear that German moves were responsible for any inevitable explosion at Danzig.

The response of Beck to American intervention was not encouraging. Biddle reported to President Roosevelt, at midnight on August 11th, that the Polish Government had decided that there could be absolutely no concessions to Germany. Beck was obviously unwilling to engage in a series of elaborate but empty maneuvers which might have been useful in deceiving the American public. Beck wished the American President to know that he was content at the moment to have full British support for his policy. Beck showed Biddle a report from Polish Ambassador Raczynski at London on August 13, 1939. The report contained the explicit approval of Halifax for recent Polish measures at Danzig.

Since March Halifax has been courting Russia for an Anglo-French-Soviet alliance, if not with Poland then without her (though her at least passive acquiescence to any arrangement would have to be obtained). The British and French missions to Moscow proceed into August, but the negotiations bog down especially on the question of Poland's role. The British and French give their OK to the possible movement of Soviet troops through Poland in a "protector" role in the case of German-Polish war. But Poland absolutely refuses any such deal. It is clear that time is running out, especially as Stalin—distrustful, with reason, of the Western Powers, and having given a series of diplomatic "hints" for months previous—begins to eye Hitler favorably, and vice-versa. Stalin would like to see a war of attrition between Germany and the West without his involvement, so that he could move in and pick up the pieces after the combattants had bled themselves dry. Hitler would like to have his hands freed in the East, after a defeat of Poland, by an accomodation with Stalin. Ideally, he hopes that such an accomodation will shock the Western Powers into thinking twice about their apparent plans for what would then amount to a one-front Western war with Germany. In this way Hitler hopes to prevent a general European war.

Roosevelt and the Attempt at an Anglo-French-Soviet Alliance

American Ambassador Bullitt at Paris was not enthusiastic about the Anglo-French attempt to conclude an alliance with the Soviet Union. He was inclined to agree with the hostile Polish attitude toward Russia. Bullitt had been American Ambassador at Moscow from 1933 to 1936, and he had few illusions about the Soviet Union. He suggested in his final report from Moscow on April 20, 1936, that the Russian standard of living was possibly lower than that of any other country in the world. He reported that the Bulgarian Comintern leader, Dimitrov, had admitted that Soviet popular front and collective security tactics were aimed at undermining the foreign capitalist systems. He insisted that relations of sincere friendship between the Soviet Union and the United States were an impossibility. He admitted that a conflict between Germany and France would expose Europe to the danger of Communist domination. He believed that it was worth taking this risk in order to destroy Germany, but he was fully aware of the danger involved.

President Roosevelt was aware that economic and social conditions in Germany were far superior to those in the Soviet Union. Ambassador Joseph E. Davies, who succeeded Bullitt at Moscow, reported to Roosevelt on April 1, 1938, that the terror in Russia was "a horrifying fact." Davies also complained about the gigan-

tic Soviet expenditures on armaments, and he reported that about 25% of the total Soviet national income in 1937 was spent on defense, compared to 10% in Germany. Davies reported that Stalin, in a letter to *Pravda* on February 14, 1938, had confirmed his intention to spread the Communist system throughout the world. Stalin promised that the Soviet Government would work with foreign Communists to achieve this goal. He concluded his letter by stating: "I wish very much . . . that there were no longer on earth such unpleasant things as a capitalistic environment, the danger of a military attack, the danger of the restoration of capitalism, and so on." Davies mentioned that General Ernst Koestring, the veteran German military attache in the Soviet Union, continued to hold a high opinion of the Red Army despite the gigantic purges of 1937 in the Russian military services. Davies concluded that the Soviet Union could best be described as "a terrible tyranny." The presentation of these reports did not prompt President Roosevelt to withdraw the statement he had made in his major address at Chicago on October 6, 1937, that the Soviet Union was one of the peace-loving nations of the world. Roosevelt was fully aware of the danger from Communism, but he believed that this consideration was unimportant compared to his preferred objective of destroying National Socialist Germany.

Premier Daladier of France would have been furious had he known that Kennard was sabotaging British pressure on Poland with the argument that American sensibilities had to be taken into account. He told American Ambassador Bullitt at Paris on August 18th that he was shocked and angered by the "violence" with which Lukasiewicz and Beck had rejected Soviet aid to Poland. Daladier claimed that it would be easy to internationalize Soviet aid to the Poles by sending two French and one British divisions to Poland by way of Russia. Daladier repeated to Bullitt three times with increasing emphasis that he would not send a single French peasant to give his life for Poland if the Poles rejected Russian aid.

Bullitt was alarmed by this revelation of what he considered a violently anti-Polish reaction on the part of Daladier. He had applied pressure for months on Daladier and Alexis Leger, the Secretary-General at the French Foreign Office, in the hope that they would distance themselves from the peace policy of Georges Bonnet and repudiate that policy. He had visited London in May 1939 to coordinate his strategy with the efforts of Sir Robert Vansittart. The Diplomatic Adviser to His Majesty's Government considered relations with France to be his own special province, and he hoped to support the Halifax war policy by securing French participation in any war against Germany. Vansittart assured Bullitt that Alexis Leger was his "intimate friend," and

that Leger could be relied upon to support the efforts of Halifax and Roosevelt to involve France in war with Germany.

Bullitt, Vansittart, and Leger feared that Sir Eric Phipps, the British Ambassador to France and brother-in-law of Vansittart, shared the negative attitude of Prime Minister Chamberlain toward an alliance between the Western Powers and Russia. Bullitt had begun to dislike Bonnet, and he reported to President Roosevelt without any regard for accuracy: "in point of fact both Bonnet and Sir Eric Phipps were opposed to bringing the Soviet Union into close cooperation with France and England." Bullitt also feared that Prime Minister Chamberlain might attempt to challenge the policy of Halifax and restore his own control over the conduct of British policy. American Ambassador Kennedy had reported from London on July 20, 1939, that Chamberlain was "sick and disgusted with Russians." The British Prime Minister believed that Hitler would welcome any tangible opportunity for a peaceful settlement. Chamberlain knew that Hitler was not bluffing and that he might gamble on a war, but he told Kennedy that Hitler "is highly intelligent and therefore would not be prepared to wage a world war."

President Roosevelt had intervened directly in the negotiations between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers on August 4, 1939. Lawrence Steinhardt, who had succeeded Davies as American Ambassador to Russia, was instructed by confidential letter to tell Molotov that the interests of the United States and the Soviet Union were identical in promoting the defeat of Italy and Germany in a European war. President Roosevelt urged the Soviet Union to conclude a military alliance with Great Britain and France, and he intimated that the United States would ultimately join this coalition of Powers. The American Ambassador was informed that President Roosevelt had told Soviet Ambassador Konstantin Umansky, before the latter departed for Russia on leave, that the United States hoped to achieve a position of solidarity with the Soviet Union against Germany and Italy.

The Russians were pleased with the Roosevelt message because it strengthened their position in negotiations with both the Western Powers and Germany, and the support of Roosevelt made it easier for them to gain consent for their ambitious program of expansion in Finland, Poland, Rumania, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The Russians had no desire to conceal from the foreign Powers the contents of the confidential Roosevelt message. The news of the message appeared in the *Voelkischer Beobachter* at Berlin on August 11, 1939, and its contents were published by the *Ilustrowany Kurjer* at Krakow on August 13, 1939. Steinhardt knew that Umansky had been informed of the contents of the Roosevelt message before leaving the United

States. The letter with the message was sent by way of Bullitt at Paris, and Steinhardt did not receive it until August 15, 1939. He concluded that Molotov had instructed Umansky to reveal the contents of the letter before it reached Russia, and that Molotov had proceeded to permit the news of the letter to reach the foreign Powers before he had actually received it himself.

Steinhardt presented the Roosevelt letter to Molotov on August 16, 1939 and the two diplomats proceeded to discuss its contents. Roosevelt, in writing the letter, had hoped to influence Russian policy in favor of the Western Powers, but it is not surprising that he failed completely in this effort, and that Molotov used the message for his own purposes. Molotov told Steinhardt that the British and French military missions had come to Russia to discuss military collaboration in terms which the Soviet Foreign Commissar characterized as "vague generalities." Molotov added that these missions were unable to contend with the specific points which Russia had raised.

Steinhardt reported to President Roosevelt on August 16th that he was personally convinced that the Soviet Union would seek to avoid participation in the early phase of a European conflict. This annoyed President Roosevelt, who seemingly would have led the United States into a European conflict on the first day of war had American public opinion and the American Congress permitted such a policy. The American President was perturbed to learn, a few days later, that Alexis Leger at the French Foreign Office was not the unconditional advocate of war-at-any-price which Bullitt had claimed. Leger revealed his opinion that it would be exceedingly unwise for Great Britain and France to attack Germany without military support from the Soviet Union. This seemed to indicate that there would be virtually no support for a war policy in France if the negotiations at Moscow failed. Roosevelt also learned that Premier Daladier was continuing to denounce the "criminal folly" of the Poles. President Roosevelt knew that Halifax would abandon his project for war against Germany if he was unable to gain the military support of either the Soviet Union or France. The possibility that the peace might be saved was perturbing to the American President who hoped to utilize a European war to achieve his dream for the perpetuation of his tenure and the increase of his personal prestige and glory.

By August 11th, even as negotiations with the British and French are still in progress, Stalin decides to exercise the option with Germany. A definite indication is sent to Berlin the next day. Russian Foreign Minister Molotov and German Ambassador Schulenberg engage in preliminary talks. With the final failure of the British and French missions, the way is open for a German-

Soviet agreement. On August 23rd, after the settling of a commercial treaty, Ribbentrop flies to Moscow; that night a German-Soviet nonaggression pact is signed and announced to the world. It is a desperate, quickly-snatched triumph for Hitler, whose satisfaction at his position is marred only by the knowledge that Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, had backed Italy down and out of the "united front" with Germany in the face of an evident Anglo-French determination to go to war over Danzig.

The German-Soviet Pact

Hitler hoped to recover the diplomatic initiative through his Kremlin pact of August 23, 1939. The effort launched by Halifax on March 17, 1939, to build a formidable British alliance front in Eastern Europe had failed. Hitler also hoped that Great Britain and France would react to this situation by withdrawing their support from Poland. He knew that his pact with Russia placed him in a strong position to resume negotiations with the Western Powers. His recent success was too sensational to permit new negotiation efforts to be readily confused with weakness. The British Government gave Hitler an excellent opening for his new diplomatic campaign by commissioning Chamberlain to write to him. The British leaders, of course, did not intend to embark on major negotiations, but Hitler had other plans. The presentation of the Chamberlain letter by Henderson on August 23, 1939, was the signal for a major German diplomatic offensive in Great Britain.

The situation would have been relatively simple for Hitler by August 23, 1939, had it not been for the unpardonable indiscretion of Ciano and the incredible conduct of General Gamelin. The statement of Ciano on August 18th that Italy would not support Germany cushioned Halifax from the impact of the German treaty with Russia, and it gave General Gamelin an excuse to rationalize the unfavorable French military situation, which had been created by the Russian agreement with Germany. The action of Ciano was especially unwarranted because the Italian Foreign Minister knew that Hitler hoped to create the maximum effect of surprise with his Russian pact. Ciano knew that his own pledge to the British would greatly reduce the impact of Hitler's diplomacy. It was easy to argue in London that the position of Hitler would be insecure if the Italians refused to be loyal to their engagements with him. Italian loyalty to Hitler and a clear decision from France against war on behalf of the Poles would surely have pulled the teeth from the Halifax campaign to launch a preventive war against Germany. The absence of these contingencies made it exceedingly difficult for Hitler to capitalize on his Russian success in negotiations with the British leaders. He was not fully

aware of this situation on August 23rd. He knew nothing of the Italian pledge to the British on August 18th, or of the crucial debate in the meeting of the French Defense Council. He failed to appreciate the adamanat determination of Halifax for war. He knew that British Ambassador Henderson was opposed to war, and he hoped that the views of the British diplomat at Berlin were shared to some extent by his master at London. Hitler was more optimistic than the facts warranted, but this was mainly because he was not fully aware of the existing situation.

The Russians too were unduly optimistic about their prospects on August 23, 1939. They overestimated the military power of France, and they expected a hopeless military stalemate on the Franco-German front reminiscent of World War I. Stalin hoped to expand his position in Eastern Europe, and to intervene militarily against Germany in the latter phase of a European war, when both Germany and the Western Powers were exhausted. There was one notably great difference in the attitudes of Stalin and Hitler. The Soviet Dictator, like Halifax and Roosevelt, was hoping for the outbreak of a general European war. Hitler considered that a European war would be a great evil, and he was anxious to prevent it. It is ironical to anticipate that the leaders of the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States ultimately joined together in true Orwellian fashion, at Nuremberg in 1945-1946, to condemn the German leaders for deliberately seeking, as "aggressors," to destroy the peace of the world.

In July, Hitler had launched a private program for peace at the suggestion of Reichsmarshall Goering. Goering's friend Birger Dahlerus, a Swedish engineer with many contacts in both Britain and Germany, arranged unofficial meetings throughout July and August between Germans and British supporters of the Chamberlain government. Other private contacts between the Germans and the British developed. Potentially good news about the attitude of influential Britons—their desire to see peace between Britain and Germany maintained—came from these conferences, including a report stating that William S. Ropp, who had been selected to head the British Air Ministry intelligence service division for Germany in wartime, claimed that there was lively opposition to war with Germany in the British Air Ministry. Ropp had further suggested that a British-French declaration of war on Germany need not be taken seriously, because it would be possible to conclude peace after the completion of the Polish phase of hostilities. Goering, ever suspicious, suspects the Ropp remarks may be a British ploy, designed to lure Hitler into gambling in Poland. But Alfred Rosenberg, head of the Foreign Policy office of the National Socialist Party, believes the sentiments may well be

genuine and accurate. His report on the matter is forwarded to the German Foreign Office and to Hitler.

Hitler Hopes for Peace—Despite Roosevelt

The German Foreign Office also received a confidential report on August 16, 1939, from Paul Legrenier, a French journalist who was sincerely friendly toward Germany. Legrenier insisted that Great Britain and France would not go to war against Germany in a conflict between Germany and Poland arising from trouble at Danzig. He was basing his report on the determination of French Foreign Minister Bonnet not to fight for Polish interests at Danzig, and on the obvious fact that Great Britain would not attack Germany without French support. Joseph Barnes, the Berlin correspondent of the New York *Herald Tribune*, estimated to the German diplomats on the same day that there was still at least a 50-50 chance that Great Britain and France would not attack Germany. Barnes added that he was basing his estimate on the assumption that Germany would make a great effort to avoid needless provocation of Great Britain and France. The reports of Ropp, Legrenier, and Barnes were received by Hitler on August 16, 1939, before the announcement of the Russo-German Pact. Hitler was convinced that the conclusion of the Pact with Russia would increase the chances for peace. It is not astonishing under these circumstances that he was more optimistic than Goering or Mussolini about the possibilities of avoiding an Anglo-German war.

The German Foreign Office was under no illusion about the official policy of President Roosevelt in the current crisis. They knew that his policy was based on the twin assumptions that there should and would be a general European war. There was also reason to believe that some of the American diplomats in Berlin did not share this attitude. British Ambassador Henderson informed the Germans that American Charge d'Affaires Kirk was constantly prodding him to insist that Great Britain would fight rather than retreat, but there was ample evidence that Kirk hoped a show of British firmness would prompt Hitler to make new proposals for a settlement. The Germans also knew that Kirk had severely reprimanded Louis P. Lochner, the American journalist, for questioning the determination of Germany to go to war. Lochner was following the tactics of the Polish journalists by claiming that Hitler was bluffing, because he knew that these tactics would encourage German defiance and make war more likely. It was obvious that Kirk would not have intervened with Lochner on his own initiative had he personally favored war, and the German diplomats were pleased to learn that Kirk had denounced his warmongering.

The Roosevelt Messages to Germany and Poland

President Roosevelt sent insincere peace messages to Germany and Poland at 9:00 p.m. on August 24, 1939. He ignored in his message to Germany the rebuff he had received from Hitler's speech to the Reichstag on April 28th by claiming that "to the message which I sent you last April I have received no reply." He proposed a settlement between Germany and Poland by direct negotiation, arbitration, or mediation. He was treading on difficult ground, because Poland, whom he favored, rather than Germany, whom he opposed, blocked the resumption of negotiations. The messages from President Roosevelt forced President Moscicki of Poland to pay lip service to negotiation, although the Polish Government did not desire to resume contact with the Germans. The reply of President Moscicki was a definite pledge to President Roosevelt that Poland would negotiate, although the Poles actually had no intention of doing so.

President Roosevelt informed Hitler that "it is understood, of course, that upon resort to any one of the alternatives I suggest, each nation will agree to accord complete respect to the independence and territorial integrity of the other." President Roosevelt imagined that this arrangement would preclude in advance any tangible Polish concessions to Germany, but its terms were entirely consistent with the Hitler offer of October 1938 which the Poles had rejected. The original German proposals were actually based upon the respect of the independence and territorial integrity of Poland. This had not prevented the Poles from rejecting them and from ordering the partial mobilization of the Polish armed forces against Germany. Hitler had revealed to the world the inaccuracies and fallacies in the Roosevelt proposals of April 15, 1939, to Germany and Italy, but President Roosevelt rarely accepted criticism. He blandly concluded his message to Hitler with the statement that the United States was prepared to contribute to peace "in the form set forth in my messages of April 14 (advance release of the messages to the American press on that date)." The Roosevelt messages to Germany and Poland were made public at Washington, D.C., at 10:00 p.m. on August 24, 1939. The message to Hitler was not submitted to the German Foreign Office by American Charge d'Affaires Kirk until 9:00 a.m. on August 25th. Hitler decided to defer his reply to President Roosevelt for several days. He was intent, because of the importance of German-American relations, upon preparing a carefully cogent and courteous exposition of the German position for the benefit of the American President.

German Ambassador Mackensen had a satisfactory conversation with Mussolini about the Russo-German treaty early on August 25, 1939. The Italian leader warmly assured Mackensen that he approved of this Pact, and he recalled that he had

suggested this himself the previous Spring. Mussolini told Mackensen that he was whole-heartedly in accord with Germany's position in the Polish question. The Italian leader described the worsening of German-Polish relations as "so acute that an armed conflict can no longer be avoided." He was convinced that the Polish mentality was "no longer responsive to reasonable suggestions, no matter from which side they might come."

Mackensen was immensely impressed by the attitude displayed by Mussolini in the absence of Ciano or [Italian Ambassador to Germany] Attolico. Mussolini claimed that the Poles should have responded to Hitler's original offer by accepting the German annexation of Danzig as an indication that they were sincere in their desire to come to a general agreement with Germany. Mussolini was convinced that "a general conference might have followed" which would have "assured European peace for fifteen to twenty years, as is desired by all." The attitude of the Italian leader on the morning of August 25th was everything which Hitler could have desired, and the German leader concluded that it would be possible to rely on Mussolini's full support. He expected a favorable statement from Italy later in the day in response to the earlier initiative of Ribbentrop.

Mussolini and Ciano had renewed their discussion about a general peace conference with [British Ambassador to Italy] Sir Percy Loraine after the announcement of the Russo-German pact. Loraine reported to Halifax on August 23rd that Mussolini wanted peace, and that he would like to mediate in the German-Polish dispute. Mussolini assured Loraine that Hitler would not accept the terms of a general settlement unless they included the German annexation of Danzig. Loraine reported that the Italians were concentrating on an attempt to gain a British concession on this one decisive point. Loraine informed Halifax that both Mussolini and Ciano were convinced that a successful diplomatic conference was the only hope for a solution of the current difficulties.

American Ambassador William C. Bullitt was advising both Halifax and the French leaders to maintain their military missions in Moscow, and to continue their efforts to detach Italy from Germany. Halifax recognized that the situation in Russia was untenable by this time. The Anglo-French teams had no choice other than to leave Russia empty-handed. Molotov granted an audience to French Ambassador Naggiar on August 25th, immediately after the British and French military men departed from the Russian capital. The Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs took pleasure in announcing to the West that the Poles were exclusively responsible for the failure of Anglo-French negotiations with the Russians for a mutual assistance pact. This announcement confirmed suspicions which French Foreign Minister

Bonnet had entertained for many days, and he was inclined for this reason to accept the Russian explanation at face value. Bonnet continued to be furious with the Poles. They had allowed Lipski to engage in an inconclusive conversation with Marshal Goering the previous day, but they had haughtily rejected his suggestion for Franco-Polish consultation on Danzig. The French Foreign Minister was resolved to retaliate by seizing the first opportunity of releasing France from her military obligations to Poland.

Halifax was no longer concerned about Russia, and he did not share the desire of Bonnet to repress Polish excesses at Danzig. He was primarily interested in creating the impression everywhere in the world that the Russo-German pact had not caused him to reconsider his policy toward Germany. Halifax dispatched uniform instructions to British diplomatic missions in all countries on August 24th. He urged them to accept the superhuman task of correcting the impression that the pact had been a blow to the "peace front" headed by England and France. He also claimed that the pact "had produced no effect" on the British Cabinet. He exhorted his diplomats that the British course was straight ahead under the slogan of "preventing the domination of Europe by Germany." Halifax did not explain how a revived German nation of eighty million German citizens could fail to be the leading continental power. After all, it had been said after 1871 that the Germany of Bismarck, with her forty million inhabitants, dominated Europe. The policy of Halifax was calculated to destroy Germany rather than to permit that normal growth and development which for centuries had been considered the natural right of every nation. It was a policy which led to the destruction of a friendly Germany and to the domination of Europe by a hostile Union pledged to overthrow the capitalist system in Great Britain.

Percy Loraine in Rome exposed himself to ridicule in an effort to meet the diplomatic requirements of Halifax. He informed Ciano on August 24 that the Russo-German pact had given him "the first hearty laugh he had had for some weeks." The same man had previously informed the Italian leaders that a pact of mutual assistance with Russia was a necessary feature of the British program. The Italians could be pardoned for suspecting that his "hearty laugh" closely resembled an hysterical scream, because they had never heard him laugh. Loraine soon learned that Halifax was under heavy pressure at home on August 24th to modify the uncompromising British stand at Danzig. The British Foreign Secretary confided to Loraine, despite his earlier circular instructions, that Great Britain might ultimately consider the return of Danzig to Germany as part of an international

settlement. Loraine was bewildered by this information, and he wondered if Halifax intended after all to encourage Mussolini to take the initiative for a conference, which again might resolve British difficulties. There had been no similar suggestion from Halifax during the entire period from the British guarantee to Poland of March 31st to the conclusion of the Russo-German pact. Unfortunately, the momentary weakening of Halifax's rigid stand at Danzig was of short duration, and he soon concluded that he could maintain his original position against the mounting opposition at home. Gilbert and Gott, in *The Appeasers*, attempt to present this incident as a sustained effort on the part of Halifax to come to terms with Germany at Danzig. Unfortunately, this was not the case.

The Polish Pledge to Roosevelt

President Roosevelt received the text of President Moscicki's message on August 25, 1939, and forwarded it to Hitler. Roosevelt emphasized to Hitler that he had a binding promise from Moscicki that Poland would engage in direct negotiations with Germany. The American President added that "all the world prays that Germany, too, will accept." Hitler knew that the message from President Roosevelt was merely a propaganda gesture to discredit Germany, and he was sufficiently shrewd to recognize that a promise made by Poland to the United States was not worth the paper on which it was written. The Poles knew that Roosevelt would support any Polish move to increase the prospect of conflict with Germany and that the American President would not react unfavorably if they refused to honor a pledge to negotiate with Germany. Hitler also knew this, and hence he concentrated on his effort to convince the British that the Poles should negotiate rather than seek to exploit the meaningless Polish response to President Roosevelt.

Beck assured American Ambassador Biddle shortly before midnight on August 25, 1939, that war between Germany and Poland was inevitable. He claimed that Poland had an adequate legal basis for a declaration of war against Germany, in case the Germans failed to take the initiative against Poland within the next few days. Beck denied that there was any truth in the Bielitz massacre, which had been confirmed by neutral sources. He claimed instead that a Polish soldier had been killed by the Germans on August 16, 1939, and that the Germans had proceeded to cut open the stomach of the corpse and to conceal in it the skull of a baby. This story was widely repeated by Polish spokesmen in the days and years which followed, although no attempt was ever made to document the incident. They failed to realize that this type of savagery was based upon certain primi-

tive voodoo-like superstitions in Eastern Europe which were not shared by the Germans. It would have been an unique historical event had modern Poland elected to base a declaration of war on this fantastic charge. American Ambassador Biddle was much impressed by the aggressive attitude of Beck. He predicted to President Roosevelt that Poland would present a series of *ultimata* to Germany if Hitler backed down in the Danzig dispute.

Beck was impressed by a public German announcement on August 25, 1939, that the Tannenberg and Nuremberg conclaves had been cancelled. The cancellation announcement, and the impressive number of incidents between the Germans and Poles on the following day, convinced the Polish Foreign Minister that a German attack would come at any moment. He did not conclude until August 27th that Hitler, after all, had taken no decisive military measures. French Ambassador Noel claimed that Beck was a very sick man at this time. The French diplomat charged that he was suffering from aggravated fatigue, tuberculosis, and an excessive addiction to stimulants. The Polish Foreign Minister ultimately died of tuberculosis in Rumania in 1944, after the British authorities had denied him permission to come to England. The French Ambassador, who detested Beck, delighted in conveying the impression that the Polish Foreign Minister was both morally and physically decadent.

German troops at the Slovak-Polish frontier had begun their advance on the morning of August 26, 1939, before countermanding orders reached them, and they crossed into Poland at Jablonka Pass. Fortunately, the Poles were not holding a position there, and an engagement was avoided when the Germans speedily retreated a considerable distance across the frontier and into Slovakia. The Poles engaged German patrols in nearly a dozen skirmishes in the Dzialdowo region directly north of Warsaw and across the East Prussian frontier. The engagements ended when the German units were suddenly withdrawn. It was significant that these serious incidents occurred on two of the most crucial sectors of the German operational plan. A massacre of minority Germans in the Lodz area and constant violations of the German frontier from the Polish side tended to deflect attention from these incidents. A Polish warship on August 26, 1939, fired at a German civilian transport airplane on which State Secretary Wilhelm Stuckardt of the Ministry of Interior was returning from Danzig. Stuckardt and the Danzig leaders had discussed the legal problems involved in the projected return of Danzig to the Reich.

Hitler's reversal of military orders naturally created perplexity in the German Army. One of the German Generals was dispatched to the Wilhelmstrasse on the night of August 25, 1939, to

inquire indignantly why the soldiers had been sent out if it was intended to settle differences with Poland by diplomatic means. The German Foreign Office had no ready answer with which to meet this embarrassing question.

In Berlin, British Ambassador Henderson, a sincere advocate of a British-German understanding who privately sympathizes with Germany in the Polish question, works tirelessly for peace in the difficult position of having to officially represent Halifax's war policy. He tries to persuade Halifax of the reality of the German minority's sufferings in Poland. He stresses that unless Poland finally negotiates with Germany there will undoubtedly be war. He remarks that from the beginning "the Poles were utterly foolish and unwise."

Roosevelt Hopes for War and Strives to Coordinate Policy

Phipps reported from Paris that Bullitt had received new instructions from President Roosevelt designed to facilitate a closer coordination of British and American policy against Germany. The American President suggested that everything possible should be done by propaganda to bring down the German regime in revolutionary chaos. Roosevelt believed that wireless propaganda should be broadcast to Germany around the clock. He expected that it would produce a great effect to argue in advance that Hitler would be solely responsible for any war. He hoped that the pacific desires of the German people might be exploited to undermine the loyalty of Germans toward their government after the outbreak of war.

Henderson continued to do what he could at Berlin to preserve peace. He contacted Polish Ambassador Lipski again on August 25th and urged him to discuss the problem of the German minority in Poland with the German Government. Henderson reported to Halifax that Italian Ambassador Attolico was horrified at the prospect of war. Attolico had declared with indignation that warmongers such as Anthony Eden should be hanged. Henderson avoided criticizing Attolico's statement about Eden in any way. Eden, to be sure, had worked with Churchill to sabotage appeasement, but the chief role in the scuttling of the appeasement policy had been played by Halifax, the man to whom Henderson addressed his report.

Sir Ronald Lindsay, the British Ambassador to the United States, addressed a series of final reports to Halifax prior to his return to England and his replacement by Lord Lothian. Lindsay indicated that Roosevelt was delighted at the prospect of a new World War. The American President had damaged his prospects in May 1939 with his unsuccessful attempt to pull the teeth from

the American neutrality laws, but he assured Lindsay that he would succeed in emasculating this legislation after the outbreak of war. He admitted that he would be forced to delay a new effort to do so "until war broke out." The American President also promised that he would not actually abide by the neutrality laws if he was compelled to invoke them. He would frustrate the purpose of the laws by delaying a proclamation of neutrality for at least five days after the outbreak of war. He would see that war material in the interim was rushed to the British in Canada in enormous quantities. Lindsay reported with his usual excessive moderation that there "was every indication in his language that the American authorities would be anxious to cheat in favor of His Majesty's Government."

Roosevelt also promised Lindsay that he would delay German ships under false pretenses in a feigned search for arms, so that they could be easily seized by the British under circumstances which would be arranged with exactitude between the American and British authorities. The British Ambassador was personally perturbed that the President of one of the important countries could be gay and joyful about a tragedy which seemed so destructive of the hopes of all mankind. He reported that Roosevelt "spoke in a tone of almost impish glee and though I may be wrong the whole business gave me the impression of resembling a school-boy prank." It was an American and world tragedy to have at this important juncture a President whose emotions and ideas could be rated by a friendly Ambassador as childish.

Halifax was inclined to regard the attitude of the American President as a product of one of the most successful British efforts in colonial propaganda. The American President, who was an enthusiastic militarist, had accepted the idea of World War II as his best escape from the economic depression in the United States. The British Foreign Secretary had studied the fantastic Lochner report about the alleged remarks of Hitler to his military men on the Obersalzberg on August 22nd. He wired Loraine in Rome on August 26th that recent information from Berlin indicated that Hitler had some kind of Polish partition in mind. His purpose was to convey to Mussolini the idea that the German leader was too extreme in his plans, at the expense of the Poles, to be amenable to a reasonable settlement of German-Polish difficulties. Halifax hoped in this way to discourage Mussolini's ideas for a diplomatic conference.

Thomsen's View of Roosevelt

State Secretary Weizsaecker had invited American Charge d'Affaires Kirk to call at the German Foreign Office on the evening of August 26th. Weizsaecker conveyed Hitler's acknowl-

edgment of the two recent messages from President Roosevelt, and Kirk expressed his pleasure at this act of courtesy. Weizsaecker advised Kirk that it would be more timely to present warnings in Warsaw than at Berlin. German Charge d'Affaires Thomsen reminded Hitler on August 28th that Roosevelt would do everything he could to encompass the downfall of Germany. He predicted that Roosevelt would employ ruthless tactics to force active American participation in a European war despite opposition from American public opinion. Thomsen was convinced that American raw materials and machines would be made available to Great Britain and France immediately after the outbreak of war, and that this measure would be popular because it would aid in overcoming the extensive unemployment. Thomsen concluded that the existing American neutrality legislation would be either abrogated or circumvented.

On August 25th, the British guarantee to Poland becomes a formal military alliance. Hitler appeals to Britain and France not to make a German-Polish dispute the cause of general European war. He offers a remarkable alliance to Britain in which German troops would guarantee the British empire around the world. The offer is brushed aside. Henderson continues his attempt to save the situation at Berlin; he urges Lipski to enter into discussions with the Germans, to no avail. Henderson's exertions are joined by those of Dahlerus, by now communicating directly between Hitler and Chamberlain and Halifax. France strongly urges Poland to negotiate with Germany. Britain does not. Poland calls up more reservists to active service. On August 29th, Hitler presents a moderate 16-point basis for direct negotiations with Poland. Poland does not respond. Beck refuses to go to Berlin to take part in discussions. On August 31st, Lipski, minus plenipotentiary powers, meets with Hitler but refuses to consider one final German proposal.

Chamberlain and Halifax

No one in the position of the British Ambassador could be blamed for desisting from further efforts to prevent war, but Henderson never stopped trying. It is this fact, combined with his unquestionable British patriotism and his determination to stand by his own country through thick and thin, regardless of the dreadful blunders of the British leaders, that make his mission to Berlin a study in courage. He tried every possible tactic to persuade Chamberlain to express his own views, and to encourage the British Prime Minister to resume leadership at the British Foreign Office before it was too late. He made a special effort to convince the British leaders that he had always been firm with

Hitler, and he recalled that he had bombarded Hitler with arguments and answers in the conversation of August 28th, which had apparently turned out very favorably for Great Britain.

Halifax continued to advise Chamberlain to ignore the complaints of Henderson and others about the attitude and policies of Poland. He received a very useful letter from Count Raczynski on August 30th. The Polish Government in this letter solemnly swore that no persecution of the German minority was taking place in Poland. The American journalist, W.L. White, later recalled that there was no doubt among well-informed persons by this time that horrible atrocities were being inflicted every day on the Germans of Poland. The pledge from Raczynski had about as much validity as the civil liberties guaranteed by the 1936 constitution of the Soviet Union.

Chamberlain complained to American Ambassador Kennedy after the outbreak of World War II "that America and the world Jews had forced England into the war." Kennedy himself was convinced that "neither the French nor the British would have made Poland a cause of war if it had not been for the constant needling from Washington." Kennedy in 1939 was subjected to constant pressure from the American Ambassador at Paris, and he placed primary emphasis on "Bullitt's urging on Roosevelt in the summer of 1939 that the Germans must be faced down about Poland." Kennedy was instructed by President Roosevelt on the telephone "to put some iron up Chamberlain's backside," a gratuitous instruction because Chamberlain had abdicated control over British policy to Lord Halifax in October 1938. Kennedy, Bullitt, and Roosevelt never succeeded in understanding this situation. They were neither well-informed, nor astute about discovering facts for themselves, and Halifax never chose to confide in them. The subsequent sting of conscience which caused Chamberlain to complain to Kennedy about America and the Jews was an attempt to shift the blame rather than a full confession. He was merely saying in different words that he and his friends might have found the courage to challenge Halifax had not the latter enjoyed the support of President Roosevelt. This was undoubtedly a defensive rationalization, because none of them ever displayed the slightest inclination to oppose Halifax. Furthermore, Halifax had decided upon a policy of war with Germany long before the German occupation of Prague, and before Roosevelt attempted to exert any considerable bellicose pressure on the British leaders. Halifax had stirred Roosevelt against the Germans before Hitler went to Prague, rather than the other way around. Roosevelt was a novice in international affairs compared to Halifax, and it was inconceivable that he could exert a decisive influence on the British Foreign Secretary.

Halifax had considered an Anglo-German war inevitable ever since 1936, and he never wavered in his campaign to destroy Germany, from October 1938, when he assumed personal control over British policy, to the outbreak of World War II in September 1939. He was more than a match for Chamberlain, the Unitarian business leader from the Midlands, or for any of his soft-spoken friends. He had refrained from wresting control over foreign policy from Chamberlain until the British leader returned from Munich to face the hostile critics within his own Conservative Party. He had never seriously criticized Chamberlain's conduct of policy until he was in a position to dominate it himself. Halifax would have been amused to hear Winston Churchill telling his friends in August 1939 that he feared the British Government "would run out over Poland." This was the wrong way to put it. Halifax was primarily worried by the possibility that France would run out over Poland. This was the only event which would prompt him to abandon his own policy of war against Germany.

On the morning of September 1st, German troops attack Poland. Hitler announces the invasion before the Reichstag, stating that the brutal suppression of the ethnic German minority and the lack of freedom and self-determination for Danzig necessitated military action. Mussolini makes last-minute pleas for a grand peace conference dealing with all causes of European conflict, to meet on September 5th, on the precondition that Danzig is returned to Germany in advance. Hitler and, initially, France, are agreeable. Britain is not, and goads France into joining with Britain in insisting on a precondition that fighting must stop in Poland. The conference plan fails. On the night of September 2nd, British ministers led by Halifax virtually demand of Chamberlain that an ultimatum be issued to Germany. It is presented the next morning, demanding not only that the fighting cease but that all German troops withdraw from Poland. With the expiration of the ultimatum at 11 a.m., Britain declares war on Germany. A French ultimatum follows, somewhat reluctantly. With its expiration at 5 p.m., France declares war on Germany. World War II begins.

Halifax and Roosevelt

It was clever of Halifax to claim that further intimate Anglo-German conversations would displease President Roosevelt. Chamberlain had been severely criticized for failing to respond favorably to an impractical proposal from Roosevelt, in January 1938, for a grandiose diplomatic conference, which would not only have failed to commit the United States to the British imperialistic program, but undoubtedly would have weakened the effort of Chamberlain to increase British influence in Italy. Lord

Lothian had succeeded Sir Ronald Lindsay as British Ambassador to the United States. Lothian, like Henderson at Berlin, favored a peaceful understanding with Germany, but he was a disciplined diplomat who subordinated his own personal views to the requirements of Halifax's war policy. The new British Ambassador was destined to play a more active role behind the scenes of American politics than any previous British diplomat. Lothian confirmed Lindsay's judgment that there was "nothing neutral" about Roosevelt's attitude. The American President insisted that "the most serious danger from the standpoint of American public opinion would be if it formed the conclusion that Herr Hitler was entangling the British Government in negotiations leading to pressure on Poland by England and France to abandon vital interests." It was obvious to Lothian that Roosevelt wanted war in Europe.

The American President knew that a diplomatic settlement of the European crisis would extinguish his own plans for American military aggression in Europe. Lord Lothian assured Halifax that the partisanship of Roosevelt extended to the minute details. Roosevelt intended to urge the belligerents at the outbreak of the expected war not to bombard civilians, because he hoped in this way to protect Warsaw, one of the Allied capitals. Lothian knew that Roosevelt would never object to a later effort by Great Britain to massacre the civilian population of Germany by means of mass bombing attacks. Roosevelt confided to Lothian that his primary objective at the moment was to evade American neutrality legislation after the outbreak of war. He was intent on renewing the struggle in the American Congress to remove the legal embargo on war material. He promised that he would refuse to admit from the very start of hostilities that aluminum sheets for airplanes were "aeroplane parts" or that airplane engine blocks had anything to do with airplanes.

Lothian confirmed the report of his predecessor that Roosevelt was delighted at the prospect of a new World War. This warlike attitude of Roosevelt was exploited by Halifax in adducing artificial arguments for closing the door on further negotiations with Hitler. There was actually no reason to fear that President Roosevelt would be in a position to cause trouble for Great Britain in the event of a negotiated settlement in Europe. The American President did not have the support of Congress or public opinion for his aggressive foreign policy, and he was nearing the end of his final presidential term, final according to the sacrosanct political tradition established by George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. It was obvious that he would need a crisis of the greatest dimensions, such as a big war in Europe, to campaign successfully for further terms of office. It would have been easy

For space reasons the 98 footnotes with which Professor Hoggan supports his case in this article are omitted from this issue of The JHR. They appear in the German edition of The Forced War (Der erzwungene Krieg: Die Ursachen und Urheber des 2. Weltkriegs [Tuebingen: Grabert Verlag]), the latest (12th) revised edition of which contains some substantial supplementations, and will of course appear in the forthcoming English edition.

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TYLER KENT served in the American State Department foreign service from 1934 to 1940, first at Moscow and then at London. While working as a code clerk at the London embassy, he began to abstract and make copies for his own use of documents which he believed indicated that President Roosevelt was lying to the American people and Congress about commitments to Britain. He was arrested by Scotland Yard in May 1940, and his diplomatic immunity was waived by Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy. Charged with violating Britain's Official Secrets Act, he was convicted in a secret trial and remained in British confinement until November 1945. Since the war he has been a businessman and publisher. He currently resides in Texas, and is working on an autobiography.

DAVID L. HOGGAN received his Ph.D. in History from Harvard University in 1948. His academic career has included teaching posts at the University of California at Berkeley, San Francisco State College, and the *Amerika Institut* of the University of Munich. In 1964 he was awarded the Leopold von Ranke Prize for historical scholarship by the Society for the Promotion of Historical Research, of West Germany. His book on the origins of World War II, *Der erzwungene Krieg*, was based on his doctoral dissertation dealing with German-Polish relations. First published in 1961, it has been kept continually in print in revised, updated editions. Dr. Hoggan's other books include: *Frankreichs Widerstand gegen den Zweiten Weltkrieg*, *Der unnoetige Krieg: Deutsche Aussenpolitik 1939-1945*, *The Myth of the New History*, and *Das blinde Jahrhundert Teil I: Amerika - Das messianische Urteil*. In the 1960s he founded the Hoggan Research Institute, at Menlo Park, California.

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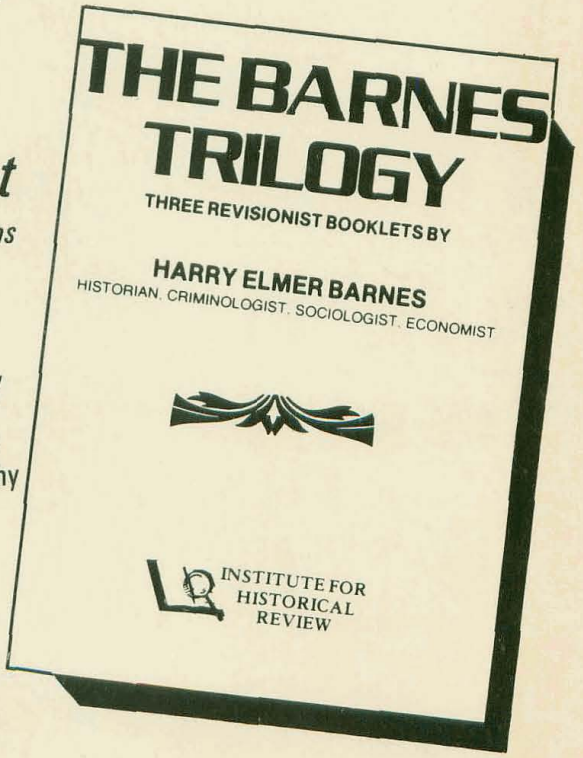

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